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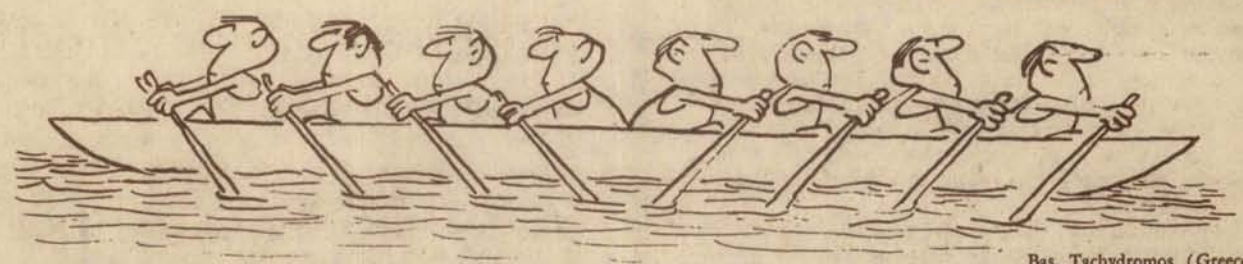

Bas, Tachydromos (Greece)

COMMUNISTS, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS & FOGGY BOTTOM

The Danger of Chaos in Italy ***Norman Birnbaum***

ATOMIC ENERGY CLOUD
The Politics of Plutonium
JOHN ABBOTTS

Resistance Gets Set for Spring
HARVEY WASSERMAN

CARTER'S CIRCULAR BRUSHOFF

Retreat from National Health

Leonard Robins

CHILEAN WRI... IN EXILE

Victo...

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LETTERS

read and understand

New York City

Dorothy Steffens's "The Promise of Humphrey-Hawkins" [*The Nation*, Jan. 21] is the best piece I've read on the new bill. Unlike most analysts, she clearly has read the bill and has understood well its meaning. It is a bill which both mandates major improvements and gives the opportunity to mobilize for further gains. The breadth of the coalition of blacks, women, unions and religious groups gives reason to support the bill and encouragement as to its effective implementation.

Alan Gartner, Professor
The Graduate School, City University of New York

Dr. Boulding's views

Boulder, Colo.

"Are the Russians still coming?" asks Alan Wolfe in "Carter's Russia Watchers: The Trilateralist Straddle" [*The Nation*, Dec. 31].

Well, at least the Communists are. Dr. Kenneth Boulding, noted economist at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and president-elect of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, seems to see them already looming ominously on our secular horizon. But, fortunately, he knows the way—the *only* way—to checkmate them.

In an interview published in the *Daily Camera* of Boulder, on December 4, Boulding was asked "whether the Christian ethic (*sic*) was losing or holding its own in the late 20th century."

He buoyantly replied: "One of the pleasant surprises of the last 100 years has been the extraordinary vitality of the Christian Church (*sic*). The only alternative is the empty greyness of the Communists."

Page the vital Rev. Dr. Billy Graham!

Bryan Fulks

what's wrong with sports

Torrance, Calif.

It is hard to believe that the Carey McWilliams who has written so penetratingly on so many subjects, and indeed whose book review-discussion on ethnicity in the very same issue is so thought provoking, is the same Carey McWilliams who wrote the utterly silly editorial "Out of Kilter" about basketball player Kermit Washington's slugging of Rudy Tomjanovich [*The Nation*, Dec. 31].

He writes: "The violence is 'structural': it is enjoyed by the fans, encouraged by the media, and implicit in player-management relations."

To say that fistic violence on the basketball floor is enjoyed by the fans and encouraged by the media is so far from reality that one must sorrowfully suppose in the writer an elitist disdain for sports, sports followers and sports writers. Basketball fans in their overwhelming majority do not enjoy such irresponsible and cowardly violence, but are revolted by it. The same goes for almost all the players. And goodness knows the press has enough faults without inventing one. I would ask McWilliams to produce *one* instance of the media encouraging punch-outs on the basketball floor. . . .

The editorial's never-never-land murkiness is compounded by such observations as: "the trouble stems from . . . the jackpot syndrome" and "individual incentives have become detached from social incentives."

If one can ferret out any point here, it is that athletes in a capitalistic society are not responsible for their actions. They are off the hook. The implications of this sophomoric leftism outside the world of sports are interesting to contemplate.

There *is* too much body contact in pro basketball. This

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EDITORIALS

The Senate Goes Wading

The Senate of the United States is sidling up to the very edge of the Panama Canal and cautiously preparing to stick a toe into that controversial waterway. But, like a barefoot child, it is ready to scuttle back to safety at the sight of the first wave. The wave in this case, of course, would be generated by the high-pressure campaign against the ratification of the two treaties that would (partially) turn the Canal over to Panama in the year 2000.

It is a discouraging spectacle. For all their breast beating and talk of "virility," the legislative champions of this wretched instrument of neocolonialism are acting cravenly. Theirs is the "failure of nerve" which they are always ascribing to the likes of us. They simply lack the courage to do the right and sensible thing and promptly turn this purloined bit of real estate over to the people from whom this country stole it seventy-five years ago.

The Nation declared itself against the two treaties three months ago (October 22, 1977), so the comments above apply only to the manner in which so many Senators are behaving. We shall summarize later a powerful argument against the treaties recently made in testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee by Prof. Richard Falk of Princeton. Our case, briefly stated, is that the handing over of the Canal to Panama has been set absurdly, dangerously far in the future and that the provisions for its "security" and "neutrality" perpetuate the bullying control we have stingily exercised since 1903.

Given those realities, as we believe them to be, it is astonishing and disheartening to observe the Senate trembling on the verge. It now seems evident that the treaties will at last be nervously ratified; the head counters of Washington are predicting a few more votes than the two-thirds that are needed. But what an undignified and timorous process has led up to this probable vote! Some forty-two Senators have trekked down to Panama to fly over the jungles and examine the lay of the land and lecture and bluster at Panama's dictator, Gen. Omar Torrijos. Some of them pretend to be appalled by the strongman's careless ways with human rights and offer him a piece of their minds on that score. Others are busy second-guessing the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the Canal's strategic value in modern warfare (which the JCS rate very low).

All of this is posturing. What really bothers our solons is the thought that they could be politically attacked for a "giveaway" of something that is "ours" ("We bought it, we paid for it and it's ours," as the Reagans of our world say). In other words, they are moved by the crudest kind of nationalism, not to say chauvinism, and are held hostage by the threatening pressures of the Right. As one counter to this the Senate's leadership, so to speak, has arranged to abdicate its normal role and handle the treaties on the Senate floor in such a way that every Senator will have a share of the credit for amending or "strengthening" them. That will also, nat-

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urally, diffuse the responsibility of the leaders of both parties for this deed.

What they mean by "strengthening" the treaties is adding an understanding that the United States will have a perpetual right to defend with force the neutrality of the Canal and also the right of our ships, in an emergency, to go to "the head of the line." It is not enough for these brave men in togas that Torrijos humbly admitted at the signing ceremonies that the treaties placed his country "under the protective umbrella of the Pentagon."

The truth is that the United States has "forced" this arrangement on tiny Panama, as Professor Falk told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 19. "I fear," he said, "that we are dealing with the Panama Canal in a reckless, sentimental fashion, fashioning a 'solution' that will bring grief to ourselves and the Panamanians." He said the treaties would "lend substantial legitimacy to the colonial character of the [past] relationship late in the 20th century."

He foresaw, in view of the 30 percent opposition to the treaties in the Panamanian referendum, that "the only way that the treaty regime can succeed is if the Panamanian Government becomes even more repressive." And he made a striking analogy between the "ambiguity" of our right to defend the Canal's "neutrality," no matter what Panama thinks, and the ambiguity of the Geneva Accords of 1954 which ended the French war in Indochina, but led to the partition of Vietnam and the vast subsequent escalation into large-scale war. Despite a specific disclaimer in the Neutrality Treaty of a "right of intervention in the internal affairs of Panama," our own recent history tells us that in fact intervention lies down that ambiguous track.

American "patriots" cannot consider a more generous, and therefore practical, arrangement with Panama, one that would lead to a more rapid withdrawal from control of the Canal. We will therefore be forced to watch the miserable squirming in the U.S. Senate that will lead to ratification of the treaties. They will then be carried in triumph to Panama by President Carter as he sets out this spring on his trip to Latin America. He will boast of having achieved an "important foreign policy objective." Its true cost in pain, trouble and perhaps blood will not be known for a while. In the meantime, *The Stars and Stripes Forever.*

Handwriting on the Sky

The world has been living through a dress rehearsal for nuclear Armageddon. To say that is not to join the loud alarmist chorus about the Soviet spy satellite whose orbit decayed into the Canadian northwoods, its nuclear power plant scattered through the wilds.

Let us accept the complacent words of Zbigniew Brzezinski that this was just a "space age difficulty." Let us put out of our minds the fact that, now that Cosmos 954 is down in radiant smithereens, there are still 938 other satellites whirling around in the heavens. The world won't end this way and it would have survived even if, on the next pass, the Cosmos had come to its fiery end

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on a New York street in the rush hour.

What is frightening about this incident are the things called to mind by the system to which Cosmos 954 belonged. The system is called "defense," here and in Russia. Now and again we get a glimpse of its awful capabilities —satellites that not only spy on one another and on the earth below but can knock each other out and trigger the nuclear weapons of both superpowers on the command of a fallible mortal still on the ground.

The United States and the Soviet Union have an agreement of sorts not to use space in a military way. That is, not to fill the skies with orbiting bombs that could rain down at the touch of a button. As far as we know, neither nation is doing that, and malfunction of the Soviet satellite is a good reason for sticking to that agreement, given what the technicians call the present "state of the art." Once something goes wrong up there, and the rockets meant to push an object into a higher orbit fail, as happened in this case, the thing is out of control and nothing can be done about it.

Obviously, the Russians wanted the Cosmos to land on their territory, if only so that our technicians could not reach into its vitals to learn what they could of its secrets. They naturally offered to help in the search, but the Canadian "hosts" of the splintered satellite, with our encouragement, firmly told them no thanks. So, oddly, it was left to some young adventurers exploring that frozen territory to stumble on the remains. Another strange coincidence is the name of the body of water near which it landed, Great Slave Lake—that must produce some bitter jokes among Soviet dissidents.

So it is not the fact that Cosmos 954's power pack had the energy equivalent of 100,000 tons of TNT stowed away in it—five Hiroshima bombs if properly triggered—that is frightening. It is the implications of all those spy satellites that haunt our minds—the reminder of the deep hostilities of the two powers, the suggestion that each side's technicians have all that power barely under control, the recollection of all the failures of policy and diplomacy that have produced these lethal systems, the frozen attitudes of ignorance, arrogance and plain greed that lie back of them.

Decay is the operative word, not just for the orbit of Cosmos 954 but for all the hopes of a rational order in the world, one in which reasonable calculation and discourse replace the coiled spring of action-reaction. Those are the messages brought to mind by the blazing fall of the Russians' giant satellite of espionage.

President McLuhan

Last winter when President Carter was preparing to declare his "moral equivalent of war" against the energy crisis in a TV talk to the American people, a furious debate broke out among his advisers. It was not about what he would say as he sat chatting beside a White House fireplace but about what he would wear. One faction was for a denim jacket and an open collar; the other fought for a business suit. The compromise was to dress him in a beige cardigan sweater over a shirt and tie. Nearly a year later, we still have no energy bill, the nation is importing oil at increasing rates, and the public is in no panic about the deteriorating situation.

Would the public have been stirred and the Congress activated if the President had worn denim? Would we now be on the way to energy self-sufficiency if his tie had been more flamboyant that night? This is the stuff of modern Presidential politics, and the Carter Presidency is surely the most image-obsessed and self-conscious we have had to date.

On January 30, *The Washington Post* ran a fascinating, and quite depressing, front-page story under the headline "Carter to Bolster Image via Television." It was full of the ruminations of the aides who handle the "image" side of the Carter Presidency. These staff puppeteers had projected the week of January 30 to February 5 as starting with a "risk-taking" press conference, continuing with a midweek "chat beside the metaphorical fireside," in the words of the *Post*'s writer, "to explain the Panama Canal treaties," and ending when he "goes 'soft' " as the "ceremonial host and visual national symbol for news coverage of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit." So there we have the compleat modern Presidency—from hard to soft in one week, all neatly extruded from the tube for popular consumption.

"The Presidency," says Carter's political marketing consultant Jerry Rafshoon, "has become an ongoing series for television." With pride, and perhaps a touch of professional contempt, Rafshoon notes that, whereas Walter Cronkite and Barbara Walters tend to be recorded on tape, "Jimmy Carter is almost alone in doing live, spontaneous television today." The President as performer; the President as communications professional. If he decides not to become a Baptist missionary when he leaves the White House (which he recently said was his intention and then retreated from the idea at his press conference), he might have a career on TV, just like Jerry and Betty Ford and Henry Kissinger.

Barry Jagoda, another of those who pull on Carter's strings, compared a Presidential press conference to the drama of a space shot which, he said, people watched because "something might go wrong and the astronauts could be burned up before their eyes." He added that he was after "that kind of authenticity, that sense of natural vulnerability" for the President. It's an exciting idea, all right, a President being burned alive at a press conference, but the record fails to show many pyrotechnical precedents for that sort of thing. Presidential press conferences tend to be quite dreary set pieces, with the actors on both sides of the podium stumbling through their familiar parts.

But wait, the worst is yet to come from the image merchants. Here speaks Jody Powell, White House press secretary: "Television may not be too deep, but it's broad as hell. When you have a subject like energy that is not chatty, you need something to indicate that this is serious business." Hence the fireside, crackling away, sending energy up the chimney? Powell doesn't explain.

Now comes the voice of James Fallows, Carter's chief speech writer (he produced six drafts of the State of the Union message): "I would bet that for the public the main impact of the State of the Union message was the scene, with the President getting lots of applause in an

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impressive setting." The *Post*'s writer, Jim Hoagland, judges that this effort of Fallows's "at least in television terms, sank without a trace." Even the forty-three bursts of applause failed to buoy it up.

It seems that there are factions among these medicine men. They all appear to agree with Rafshoon's view that "all politics is marketing," but they split on the various ways to peddle their product, the President of the United States. Some like it "hard" and some like it "soft" and there are those who prefer the hard-soft mix, which might be called spongy. Jagoda: "President Carter has a low-key personality. . . . The average guy can come across very ebullient. Television helps bring Jimmy Carter up to perceived normalcy."

So the President apparently owes a good deal to television and all those flacks work hard to make sure that his interests and those of the networks are, as Jagoda put it, "in harmony." At the moment, they seem to believe they are. Whether the concerns of the Republic, when properly described, are all that harmonious with those of its Chief Executive is another question. But if anything that substantive should go out of whack, surely the media manipulators can push it back into shape. A little highlight on the cheekbones, a few more applause lines, a bigger blaze at the fireside and all will be well.

It is surprising that the puppet never feels like reaching up and giving the strings a tug himself, that he allows all that chatter to float down over the audience from the puppeteers' platform. It makes him seem a trifle unreal, not altogether his own man. Will the real Jimmy Carter please stand up?

Writers and Forgers

In last week's issue we promised "more" on the forgery of which this magazine and two women in the City University of New York were the victims. Unfortunately, we can't reveal the identity of the forgers, having been unable to track them to their anti-feminist lairs. (We say "anti-feminist" because the letters we printed, and answered editorially, were crude caricatures of a serious feminist position and therefore harmful to the legitimate cause of providing more access in this and other publications for the writing of women.)

We would, however, add a word in defense of the National Organization for Women (NOW), which the forgers threatened to sic onto us unless we mended our alleged ways. NOW is not in the threat business and never has been. It has met with the managers of various publications in an attempt to have them change their approaches to women's issues, but it avoids strong-arm methods as a matter of sensible policy.

The forged letters we printed show, among other things, a profound misunderstanding of the whole idea of affirmative action, which we have consistently supported. In its serious form, affirmative action works to cast a larger net farther, in order to bring talents blocked by prejudice into all the areas of productive work. That is one of the worthiest of human causes. Again we express our regret at having added to the misunderstanding of that cause by printing those crude forgeries.

Congress Plays Post Office

Seduced by the folk belief that business management can perform miracles with any and all public services, Congress decided in 1970 to abolish the 200-year-old Post Office Department and set up a new independent federal agency governed by a board of long-term (nine-year) appointees, who in turn were given power to name the Postmaster General. The new structure was supposed to remove the postal service once and for all from political meddling and endow it with the discipline and drive of modern business methods. Seven years would seem to be a sufficient test period for the reconstituted service. While there is nearly universal agreement that the Postmaster General who, by happy accident, is named Benjamin Franklin Bailar, is a competent, hard-working business executive, the experiment has not worked out as Congress thought it would. The cost of mail service has shot up astronomically since 1970, many important services have been dropped or curtailed, and still more drastic cuts are threatened. In its haste to unload responsibility on the new agency, Congress failed to provide adequate and specific policy guidelines and in effect crippled the service by insisting that it be largely self-supporting. Given a mandate of this kind and faced with rising costs, Mr. Bailar has had no choice but to make cuts and reduce services. In some instances these measures have resulted in a decline in the use of the mails which, of course, has meant reduced revenues. Worse, the drop in patronage has been perversely cited as "proof" that the postal service is destined to be replaced by more modern and "efficient" modes of communication, and that has encouraged the tendency to curtail services still further.

Now Congress has decided to update its handiwork of 1970. A bill introduced by Reps. James Hanley (D., N.Y.) and Charles Wilson (D., Calif.), which will probably be debated on the floor this month, would increase the annual "public service" subsidy from $920 million to more than $2 billion; it would also require that the extra money be used to maintain current services, including Saturday mail deliveries. It would give Congress a veto on postal rate increases, abolish the present board of governors, and restore to the President the power to appoint the Postmaster General. While it has received little attention, few measures in the current session will have greater long-term practical day-to-day significance, the mails being of universal concern. Mr. Bailar insists, and with reason, that making changes in the structure of the postal service will not necessarily cause its problems to disappear. And he feels that it would be unfair to increase the public subsidy to $2 billion annually—double what it is now—since 80 percent of the Post Office's volume is business mail. The subsidy is only a small part of the current operating cost, now estimated at $16 billion annually. But while Mr. Bailar has indeed cut costs—the 1977 deficit will be less than $700 million, compared to $1 billion in each of the two previous years—he seems to have missed the point.

Of course the postal service should be operated efficiently and costs should be minimized; good manage-

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ment is imperative. But how is "efficiency" to be measured? The mails represent the classic case of a basic and fundamental public service which it would be folly to view as a business enterprise operating under a compusion to break even, if not to show a profit. To view it in this way is to encourage reliance on the wrong kind of bookkeeping. Adequate, efficient and low-cost postal services are unquestionably a great aid and stimulant to the economy at all levels, in every region. To view these services as though they constituted a "business" in their own right is a fundamental misconception. The present difficulties of the service stem from the fact that it is impossible to divorce management problems from general policies and social objectives. By saddling the board of governors with an obligation to "balance the books" without policy guidelines or adequate funding is to insure that modern business techniques will be used to curtail and debase an essential public service.

On the basis of past experience, Congress should not attempt to "manage" the postal service by minute legislation, nor should it become involved once again in post office politics; its function is to set adequate standards of public service and provide the funds to meet them. Mr. Bailar is willing and able to provide—efficiently and with a minimum of waste—whatever quality of service Congress wants and is prepared to underwrite. But in the absence of such guidelines and funding, he will remain the prisoner of "the bottom line" imperative. Before 1970 the perennial problem of the postal service was "politics" as practiced over two centuries, but business management in itself is not the alternative. It is but another example of how an inappropriate solution becomes part of the problem. CAREY MCWILLIAMS

THE IMAGE POLISHERS

VERN L. BULLOUGH

The FBI under J. Edgar Hoover was particularly sensitive to any criticism by any individual or group. Any person suspected of being critical of the FBI could arouse the fury of Hoover and his minions. The FBI files on the ACLU of Southern California, which run to several thousand pages, give many examples of FBI concern over its image, and a good example deals with the article by Fred Cook on the FBI that appeared in *The Nation* in 1959.

From the ACLU files it appears that Hoover himself was angered by the article and stated that the official policy of the FBI in reference to the article was "to not dignify" it with any response. Some times, however, inquiries about the article proved troublesome and one that particularly upset the FBI was made by a member of Southern California ACLU's speakers bureau in the last week of June 1959. In a telephone conversation to the Los Angeles office of the FBI, which was summarized for the Washington office, someone from the ACLU explained that the organization had been invited by a local Democratic club to speak on FBI practices. The speaker selected to address the group had read Cook's article and was sufficiently concerned about the charges to check with the FBI in order to give a more equitable presentation in his talk. The agent in charge of the Los Angeles FBI office said that the agency would refuse to talk to anyone about the article. The speakers bureau coordinator, however, was not put off by such a reply and promised that, whether the FBI wanted to talk or not, the chosen speaker would be in its offices at a specific time. If the FBI then wanted to ignore the person in its office it could do so, but as far as the ACLU was concerned any citizen had a right to ask questions about the FBI.

Immediately the local FBI office informed Washington of this new danger, and in the process sent information about the "subversive background" of the proposed speaker, and reiterated the problems the FBI had been having with the ACLU of Southern California. From the FBI files it appears that the agency regarded Southern California as the most troublesome of all ACLU affiliates. It was standard practice for the FBI to answer all inquiries about the ACLU with the statement that it had never been formally investigated by the FBI, but that the California Committee on Un-American Activities had in 1948 and 1955 specifically documented the ACLU of Southern California as being Communist-infiltrated. Since the California committee had in turn been denounced by the ACLU, the FBI was particularly suspicious of anyone associated with the Southern California affiliate. Because Carey McWilliams, then editor of *The Nation*, also had had a long affiliation with ACLU of Southern California, this added to the suspicions of the FBI about the magazine. Thus both of these suspect groups came together in the minds of the FBI on what seemed like a simple request to get more information about the FBI.

The ACLU speaker appeared as scheduled in the office of the FBI at the specified time and after some waiting was seen by an agent. The speaker, according to the FBI, indicated that if the agent did not want to talk about the Cook article, they should turn to other things, and then proceeded to ask questions about how the office worked, what kinds of complaint came in, the workload of the agents, etc. In fact, the local agent saw the questions as an opportunity for good public relations. Still, when he summarized the interview for the Washington office the FBI noted in the record that the local agent had erred by talking to the ACLU of Southern California.

The case, however, was not over. The FBI also sent out an informant to listen to the speech and report its

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Vern Bullough is professor of history at California State University, Northridge, director of the Center for Sex Research there, and one of the several vice presidents of the ACLU of Southern California. His most recent major book is Sexual Variance in Society and History *(Wiley Interscience).*

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contents. This rather convoluted procedure is only one example among many of what was standard FBI practice. The quantity of correspondence and of files required to store it indicate that a good part of the FBI budget must have been devoted to maintaining the proper image. Though the FBI had satisfied itself that criticisms by *The Nation* or by the ACLU of Southern California could be dismissed, it nonetheless spent a lot of time dealing with the mundane activities of both these groups—time it might better have spent in fighting crime. For those who wonder why the FBI had such a poor record fighting organized crime when Hoover was at its head, the answer seems to be obvious—it was too busy polishing its own image. □

THE ATOMIC ENERGY CLOUD

The Politics of Plutonium

JOHN ABBOTTS

Our best hope for meeting the nation's growing demand for clean energy lies with the fast breeder reactor. —President Richard M. Nixon, April 1971

The United States will defer indefinitely commercial reprocessing and recycling of plutonium, as well as the commercial introduction of the plutonium breeder. —President Jimmy Carter, April 1977

In June 1973, the Washington, D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, ruling on a suit brought by the Scientists' Institute for Public Information (SIPI), ordered the Atomic Energy Commission to prepare an environmental impact statement on the agency's program to develop the plutonium breeder reactor. That case was the start of a series of legal and administrative developments which slowed, and now possibly may have halted, the development of a plutonium-based nuclear power industry. The long battle against plutonium demonstrates how minority positions can in time become accepted policy. J. Gustave Speth, the environmental lawyer who represented the Scientists' filing of the breeder suit in May 1971, is now a member of Carter's Council on Environmental Quality —tangible evidence that anti-plutonium sentiment is part of the administration's position on energy.

The plutonium story also illustrates the environmental lawyer's chief weapon: legitimate delay gained by invoking the procedures of the National Environmental Policy Act. Delay for its own sake is futile, but delay to force an agency to comply with the law, or to produce a detailed analysis and evaluation which could cause decision makers to rethink their options, is a procedural barrier against half-baked or ill-conceived policies. That is not to say that the Environmental Act will prevent bad policy, but it is a safeguard.

The dangers of plutonium, an extremely toxic substance and the stuff of which nuclear bombs are made, are widely acknowledged. The operating records of small, early plutonium facilities, such as the Kerr-McGee plant at Crescent, Okla.; the Babcock & Wilcox plant at Leechburg, Pa., and the defunct Nuclear Fuel Services reprocessing plant at West Valley, N.Y., are blotted with frequent incidents of worker overexposure, environmental contamination and poor security. As long as plutonium, a byproduct of reactor operation, remains in the fuel rods where it is formed, it is intermixed with other radioactive substances. However, if the used rods are sent to a reprocessing plant, the plutonium can be separated and purified, and in that form converted into a nuclear weapon. Reprocessed plutonium would be a prize for terrorists and a nuclear proliferation temptation for nations with their own commercial nuclear fuel cycle.

The breeder reactor, which employs a configuration different from that of today's water-cooled reactors, will theoretically produce more plutonium fuel than it consumes, but added to the dangers of the plutonium fuel cycle are other unresolved safety problems. While a water-cooled reactor cannot explode like a bomb, breeder enthusiasts only reluctantly discuss the "Hypothetical Core Disassembly Accident." An accident could melt and rearrange the plutonium fuel, and subsequent interactions could "disassemble the machine"—blow up the reactor, in ordinary language.

In 1971 the centerpiece of the federal plutonium development program was the demonstration breeder reactor on Tennessee's Clinch River. In its haste to get the Clinch River Breeder Reactor underway, the Atomic Energy Commission filed an environmental impact statement for its operation alone. The AEC made no evaluation of the long-range and widespread consequences stemming from the industry that would develop when the commission let the plutonium genie out of the bottle.

Accordingly, Speth, then an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council, a national environmental group, sued the AEC on behalf of the Scientists' Institute, asking the agency to prepare the more extended programmatic impact statement, and in due course the Washington Court of Appeals overturned a lower court decision and ruled in favor of SIPI. The higher court found that the AEC had taken a "crabbed approach" to meeting the stipulations of the Environmental Policy Act and ordered the agency to conduct the more extended analysis.

John Abbotts, staff scientist for the Public Interest Research Group in Washington, D.C., is co-author with Ralph Nader of The Menace of Atomic Energy (*W.W. Norton*).

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In subsequent negotiations, the Atomic Energy Commission promised not to begin construction of the Clinch River prototype until it had made this statement available. The Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), which inherited the promotional activities of the dismembered AEC, completed the statement in December 1975, but by then the experimental plant's own cost overruns and fiscal delays had prevented the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (which inherited the *AEC*'s regulatory authority) from issuing Clinch River's license.

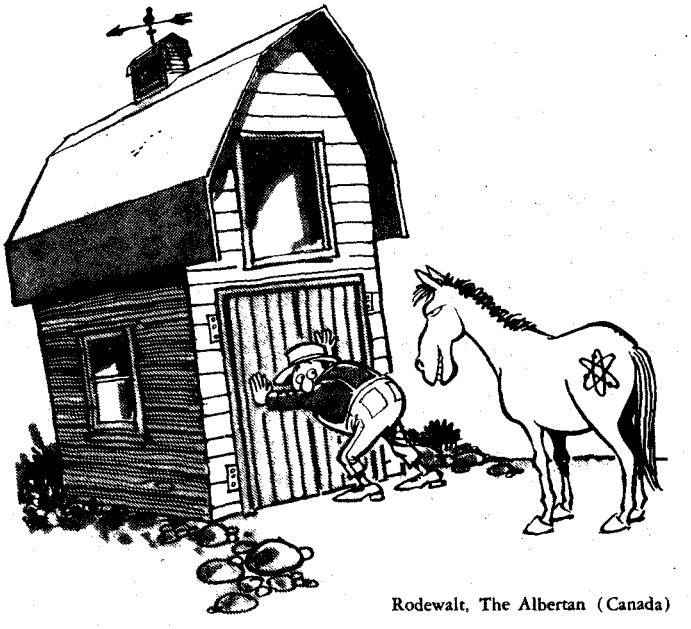
Then, in April 1977, the licensing proceeding was suspended in accordance with President Carter's desire to "defer indefinitely" plutonium fuel cycle for health, economic and nonproliferation reasons. Therefore, although the breeder's future remains uncertain, because Congress has authorized and appropriated funds to keep the Tennessee experimental project alive, its momentum has slowed drastically. If Speth's scientific clients had not challenged the AEC's procedural violation of the Environmental Policy Act, construction at Clinch River might now be underway, making it much more difficult—if not impossible—for the President to stop it.

The second part of the industry-government strategy to develop the plutonium economy was a proceeding known as GESMO. As an indication of bureaucratic double talk, this acronym, although it is central to the plutonium industry's plans, does not mention "plutonium" even when spelled out. (It stands for Generic Environmental Statement on Mixed Oxide Fuel, mixed oxide referring to a blend of uranium and plutonium.)

GESMO's goal is to allow plutonium to be reprocessed and fabricated into nuclear fuel for present-day nonbreeder reactors. The argument for this procedure is that it would "stretch" uranium reserves by substituting the reactor byproduct plutonium for uranium. But GESMO would also set up the reprocessing and fuel fabrication plants needed to support a breeder operation in the future.

The GESMO proceedings began in August 1974 when the AEC staff released a programmatic draft environmental impact statement recommending that plutonium reprocessing and plutonium reactor fuel be licensed. Opponents criticized the statement for failing adequately to investigate the issue of safeguarding plutonium from theft, including an analysis of measures to be used, and how such measures might affect civil liberties. The draft statement had vaguely mentioned such options as tighter security regulations for facilities, establishment of a federal police force to respond to plutonium emergencies, and wide-scale background security checks on employees. In January 1975, the federal Council on Environmental Quality echoed public concern by advising the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that a more extended analysis of safeguards was necessary. The NRC agreed to follow the council's suggestion before allowing the use of plutonium fuel.

In November 1975, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced its GESMO procedures and was quickly challenged in court. The NRC intended to conduct public hearings, thus establishing a record before making a decision to allow or disallow the commercial production of plutonium fuel. But before it ostensibly decided on such broad use, the commission would allow "interim" licensing of individual plutonium facilities.



Rodewalt, The Albertan (Canada)

The interim licensing provision would chiefly benefit a nuclear reprocessing plant under construction in Barnwell, S.C. Owned jointly by Allied Chemical, Gulf Oil, and Royal Dutch/Shell, a major portion of the Barnwell plant is already constructed, but the owners were waiting for a final decision on GESMO before building the plutonium-related facilities. They also conducted extensive negotiations with ERDA, asking for federal funds to operate Barnwell as an "experimental" facility. An interim license would allow Barnwell to operate as a commercial plant or, funded by taxpayers, as a demonstration facility. But the practical effect of an interim license would be to prejudice the final decision on general use: plutonium facilities already operating would place tremendous pressure on the NRC to sanction commercial plutonium fuel.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, a group in the forefront of plutonium issues, challenged the NRC procedures through its lawyer, Anthony Z. Roisman. In May 1976, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the NRC's plans. Calling the commission's criteria for interim licensing "wholly inadequate," "at best vague and at worst disingenuous," the court held that the NRC could not "circumvent" the Environmental Policy Act, and accordingly prohibited interim licensing.

In September 1976, the NRC released the first part of its final environmental statement, and began public hearings on GESMO. In April 1977, in response to President Carter's announcement that the nation would defer the development of a plutonium fuel cycle, the NRC-appointed hearing board suspended the hearings, and the Public Interest Research Group moved to terminate the GESMO proceeding. Replying to a subsequent request by the NRC commissioners for views on whether the proceeding should continue, the White House in October 1977 recommended that GESMO be terminated.

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Backed into a corner by the President, the NRC terminated its proceedings on December 23, 1977, although the commission reserved the option to reopen the matter upon completion of lengthy studies on plutonium and proliferation. As with the breeder, a legal challenge had made possible the necessary reassessment of plutonium's benefit-danger equation. If the National Resources Defense Council had not challenged the commission's procedures, Barnwell might well be operating now, making it very difficult for Carter to implement his policy—which included prohibiting federal funds for operating the plant.

To be sure, the battle against plutonium is not over. The Congressional appropriation of funds for the Clinch River project attached riders that will make it difficult for Carter to veto. Observers expect the nuclear industry to sue NRC to keep the GESMO hearings going. But the momentum on the issue has shifted. Earlier, the White House gave the "plutonium economy" significant support, and the consumer and environmental community needed action by Congress or the courts to slow plutonium's development. Now, it is the industry which must depend on the Congress or courts to defy the President's position. Moreover, advocates of the breeder will find it difficult to continue their guerrilla warfare. In 1977, Carter supporters in Congress beat back attempts to fund the Clinch River construction, and the President's opponents were able to appropriate only enough money to keep the plant in limbo for another year—neither terminating the project nor going ahead. What this does is pour taxpayer money into a facility that produces no electricity and demonstrates nothing. Plutonium proponents cannot maintain this "no-win" position for long.

Despite the progress on the issue, it is little consolation to consumers and environmentalists that along with Speth, the major actor from the beginning of the plutonium fight has been James R. Schlesinger. Now Carter's Secretary of Energy and close adviser, Schlesinger was AEC chairman from August 1971 to February 1973. He accompanied President Nixon to the dedication of a breeder research facility at Hanford, Wash., in September 1971. There, Nixon admitted that, "All this business about breeder reactors and nuclear energy is over my head," and told reporters, "Don't ask me what a breeder reactor is, ask Dr. Schlesinger." Schlesinger has also surrounded himself at the Department of Energy with pro-nuclear, pro-breeder officials. But if President Carter who, unlike Nixon, understands plutonium issues well enough, can resist the blandishments of Schlesinger and other advisers wedded to nuclear power, the plutonium economy may finally be laid to rest. □

Resistance Gets Set for Spring

HARVEY WASSERMAN

At 9:30 A.M., last December 18, an explosion rocked the Millstone I nuclear reactor at Waterford, Conn. Hours later, while plant officials were on the phone to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a second explosion blew an 80-pound steel door 130 feet through the air and into a nearby warehouse, contaminating a storeroom supervisor.

The blasts that shot radioactivity into the atmosphere also added new bitterness to a confrontation that in recent weeks has brought the nuclear industry in New England close to paralysis, witnessed key trials of anti-nuclear activists across the United States, and marked the announcement of spring and summer dates for a series of critically important civil disobedience actions. Indeed, these latest "incidents" at accident-prone Millstone could hardly have come at a worse time for its owner, Northeast Utilities (N.U.), or for the nuclear industry.

With 56 percent of its 1976 output coming from nuclear plants, N.U. is more heavily committed to nuclear energy than any other utility in the United States. For months now, it has been demanding a $90 million rate hike to help push that percentage still higher. Specifically, the money would cover interest on N.U.'s 12 percent share in reactors under construction at Seabrook, N.H.; push ahead its 75 percent investment in a twin plant proposed for Montague, Mass., and provide for completion of N.U.'s third reactor at Millstone, under construction since 1973.

But public reaction was heated, to say the least, and Connecticut's Public Utilities Control Authority (PUCA) ruled in November that N.U. could justify only $35 million of the proposed rate hike. Furthermore, the three-member commission ordered the utility to curtail drastically its nuclear program. Citing falling electrical demand, improved prospects for conservation and alternative energy, "skyrocketing" nuclear construction costs, and "problems associated with various aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle," the PUCA ordered N.U. to get out of Seabrook, to drop Montague, and to complete Millstone III as soon as possible.

In response, N.U. defiantly laid off the 1,200 workers at Millstone III, saying the rate denial meant they "could not proceed." In a classic case of environmental blackmail, the company then began organizing support for the additional money by claiming its denial had cost the state 1,200 jobs. Soon thereafter the Millstone I explosions contaminated the area in an incident that might have had serious effects on workers at Millstone III. As it happened, they were lucky to have been laid off.

That, however, did little to mollify Gov. Ella Grasso and other state officials who were infuriated by N.U.'s failure to notify them promptly that the explosions had occurred. After the earlier mishaps, Grasso had ordered

Harvey Wasserman is the author of Harvey Wasserman's History of the United States (*Harper & Row*). *He is a long-time anti-nuclear activist.*

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N.U. to inform her office within an hour of any incident at Millstone. As it was, she wasn't told of the morning's blast and radioactive "puff" until late in the afternoon.

Grasso's anger was echoed four days later in the north, when news broke through the Associated Press that a similar explosion at the Vermont Yankee plant at Vernon had gone entirely unreported. Occurring on December 10, the incident became public knowledge only when plant officials casually mentioned the incident to a member of the state public service board. "If the technical competency of Vermont Yankee was as bad as its public relations," said the state's pro-nuclear Gov. Richard Snelling, "we'd all be in the dark."

And the nuclear industry's winter of bad news was hardly limited to these explosions. On the day of the Millstone blowout, Boston Edison leaked word that it was postponing for the third time its target date for opening its second reactor at Plymouth. Citing a slump in the demand for electricity and the prospects of rate reform, the announcement was accompanied by the news that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) had denied Boston Edison a conditional construction permit, thus making it more difficult for the company to get the project built to a point where public resistance would probably not halt it.

A week earlier N.U. had formally acknowledged its second postponement of the Montague project, and revised its "on-line" target date for Millstone III to 1986. New England Power Company also joined the crowd by pushing back its target date for twin nukes planned at Charlestown, R.I.

Further down the coast, the Public Service Company of New Jersey announced a three-year delay in its plans to float reactors in the ocean north of Atlantic City. In Louisiana, the utilities commission has denied nearly all of Louisiana Power and Light's $55 million rate hike request, thus projecting a dubious future for the company's Waterford III reactor, now under construction. And in California, Gov. Jerry Brown's energy commission slashed one of two reactors proposed at Sundesert, and made the other at best "iffy."

But though the pattern of postponement and uncertainty spreads across the country, the reverses have been heaviest in New England. Lacking in fossil fuels, and with long winters and much industry, the region was once considered atomic power's prime territory. But with every proposal for a new plant in doubt, and with the one under construction in disarray, the region has become a proving ground for the anti-nuclear movement. And nowhere is that drive more strongly organized than at Seabrook, N.H.

Since July 1976, construction has proceeded sporadically at the Seabrook site. Despite myriad legal challenges, a bitterly contested rate hike, and the financial shakiness of the public utility that is building the plant (see Wasserman: "Resistance Nears a Critical Mass," *The Nation*, October 8, 1977), Seabrook won NRC approval and some 1,200 construction workers are getting the twin 1,150-megawatt reactors ready for 1984 and 1986 openings.

But the site has also been the scene of three mass nonviolent occupations designed to prevent the openings in those or any other years. And in early November, the Clamshell Alliance, which organized the occupations, set plans for a fourth—this one promising to be the biggest mass civil disobedience march in this country in many years.

Meeting at Putney, Vt., the November congress was attended by some 300 representatives from more than fifty Clamshell groups. The weekend meeting set June 24 as the date for the next direct-action, nonviolent attempt to halt construction. The Clamshell vowed also to restore the devastated 750-acre Seabrook site to at least a semblance of its natural state, and to install natural energy equipment as a symbol of the movement's commitment to renewable forms of power. All those wishing to occupy would undergo special training in nonviolent techniques. Reflecting a deepened commitment to neighborhood organizing, the alliance also specified that occupiers are to engage in door-to-door canvassing before coming to take the site.

The Clamshell decision to reoccupy was the more dramatic because sixty-four of its members who had occupied the site last April 30 were due to face trial at Rockingham County Superior Court the next day. The trials had been demanded by the alliance as part of the membership's wish to test in front of a jury the merits of civil disobedience in the context of the dangers of atomic energy.

The first case was called on November 8 with Carter Wentworth, 26, an artist from nearby Kensington. He had agreed to be the focal point of the Clamshell's attempt to "put nuclear power on trial." The New Hampshire judiciary, however, was unwilling to go along.

Wentworth and his lawyer, Eric Blumenson of Boston, had intended to make their case on the New Hampshire "competing harms" statute. The law states that an individual is justified in breaking the law if he or she is attempting to prevent a damage greater than would ensue from the illegal act. Swerving illegally to avoid a pedestrian is a common example of the situation. However, when the statute was raised by Blumenson, Judge Wayne Mullavey ruled it out of order.

After swearing in the three-man, three-woman jury, Mullavey next barred a long string of witnesses who were to testify on the dangers of nuclear power, the politics of nuclear licensing and the history of civil disobedience. Among those not allowed to speak were Drs. Helen Caldicott and Rosalie Bertell, experts in the health effects of radiation; Prof. Howard Zinn, who has made a study of civil disobedience, and Tony Roisman, a Washington attorney who has represented people opposing the Seabrook permits.

A series of character witnesses did testify, however, as did Clamshell members, who explained to the jury the aims and procedures of the Seabrook occupations, including a long analysis of the meaning of nonviolence and the commitment to stopping nuclear power. Finally, Wentworth took the stand. "I went to Seabrook to protect my life and my neighbors' lives," he said. "I was acting under the freedoms given to us in our Constitution and the Declaration of Independence."

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Although Mullavey had denied the relevance of the competing harms law, Wentworth and the Clamshell witnesses continually referred to it. It thus came as no surprise when the jury, during deliberations, asked Mullavey for a copy of the statute. Instead, the judge sent in his own interpretation of it, which varied significantly from the original. In his charge to the jury, Mullavey also misinterpreted the criminal trespass statute itself, neglecting to emphasize that the defendant must "knowingly" commit the crime.

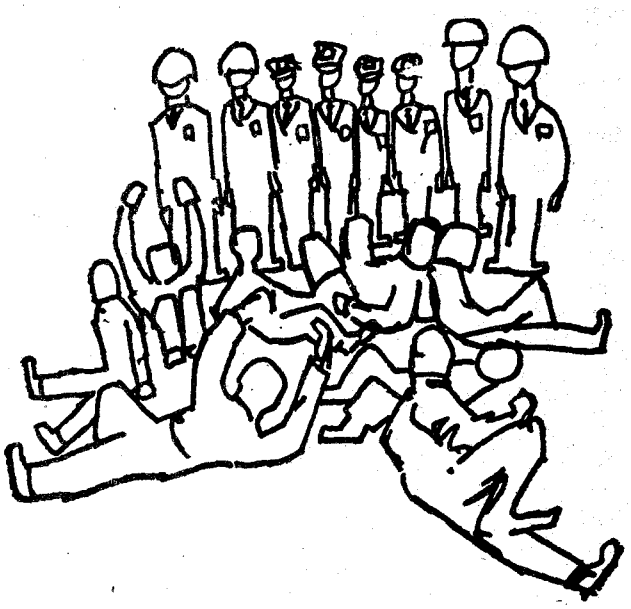
The jury brought a verdict of guilty. "Had we been able to call our witnesses, and had the jury been properly informed of the competing harms and criminal trespass laws, we're sure Carter would have been found innocent," said Robin Read, speaking for the alliance. Mullavey, however, had more up his sleeve. Ignoring prosecution requests for a fifteen-day sentence and a $100 fine, he pounced on the opportunity to slap Wentworth with four months in prison. It was the stiffest sentence for criminal trespass handed down by Rockingham County in at least twelve years. The occupation, Mullavey said, had been "mob action," producing "an explosive situation. This is one of the few cases since I've been on the bench in which sentencing may serve as a deterrent to future crimes of this type."

Trials held under similar conditions in the adjoining courtroom of Judge William Cann resulted in two- and three-month sentences for Carolyn Dupuy, a Hartford nun, and Roger Cole, a former local football hero. Court Dorsey, a street musician from DeKalb, Ill., followed Wentworth in front of Judge Mullavey conducting his own defense. He too received a guilty verdict and three-month sentence.

Mullavey's hostility and stiff sentences set the stage for the alliance's fourth occupation announcement. "Unjust sentencing like that won't scare people away," said Clamshell representative Cathy Wolff. "If anything, it'll bring more."

Shortly thereafter, twenty-two former occupiers were sent to various New Hampshire county jails for refusing to pay $100 fines resulting from their arrests. Most of them spent twenty days. One group managed to screen *The Last Resort*, a documentary film about the Seabrook occupations, in the Stafford County jail at Dover.

Although the Superior Court verdicts were hailed by plant supporters as a victory, it was at best a pyrrhic one. The court had presided over "nuclear power on trial" by refusing to hear evidence against nuclear power —in perfect accord, the Clamshell said, with the way the entire public debate has been conducted. In addition, the court could dispose of just four cases in more than a week of sittings. Some 1,500 Seabrook-related cases remain to be tried, and that is now a very hot issue in a county that has become both increasingly anti-nuclear and increasingly concerned over the cost of trying and jailing so many occupiers. The state once promised financial help to the county but has so far not produced it and the alliance announcement of a new occupation almost guarantees that thousands more of potential defendants are as good as on their way. (Whether they



actually make it into Rockingham's courts and jails remains to be seen. Local officials are promising "dogs, fire hoses and tear gas" rather than mass arrests at the next occupation.)

Meanwhile, parallel trials were going on throughout the United States with astonishingly varied results. At Brattleboro, Vt., eighteen members of the Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance were fined $25 each for blocking the Vernon plant gates on October 5. In California, members of the Abalone Alliance were involved in a far more complex legal battle. Fifty-one had been arrested last August 7 while occupying at the Diablo Canyon plant in San Luis Obispo. (See "The Fault of Diablo Canyon," by T.W. Speers and Paula von Lowenfeldt, *The Nation*, October 8, 1977.) Their initial sentences, handed down by a local judge, included a rare mandatory $500 fine. But in the midst of proceedings, the Abalones discovered that their ranks had been infiltrated by at least two police undercover agents, one of whom was prominent on the alliance legal committee. Richard Lee, who proved to be a local deputy sheriff, was "very active in our defense," says Raye Fleming, an Abalone founder and occupier. "It's hard for us to understand what could motivate a person to be that dishonest with himself."

Whatever motivated him, Lee's infiltration may have resulted in "leaks" from the Abalone defense committee —which, in turn, may result in the charges being dropped. The case is now being appealed on the ground, among others, that the infiltrations flagrantly violated attorney-client privilege and voided the Abalones's chances for a fair trial.

Further up the West Coast, members of the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance (TDA) engineered a trial that was everything the Clamshell trials were not. Eighty-one TDA members occupied at the Trojan plant, some 30 miles northwest of Portland, Ore., last August 6. The day after Thanksgiving, 124 repeated the act. In a five-day trial that ended December 16, ninety-six TDA defendants were found innocent of trespass charges. At the outset, Columbia County District Judge James Mason

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allowed expert testimony into the case, with the reservation that it might later be stricken from consideration. Although Mason would have preferred to ban the testimony altogether, TDA's Norman Solomon said, "That was part of the deal. Unless the judge allowed our experts to testify, we were going to go for individual trials, which would have cost the county a fortune."

Thus Drs. Bertell and Ernest Sternglass, a radiation expert from the University of Pittsburgh, lectured the jury on cancer rates and radiation levels surrounding nuclear power plants. Lon Topaz, a former director of the state Department of Energy, gave angry testimony against the Trojan reactor, calling it "an imminent danger" to human life that "should be immediately shut down and decommissioned."

The defense testimony received statewide media coverage during the trial. It did not, however, prevent Judge Mason from instructing the jury to consider neither the state's "choice of evils" law, nor the nuclear-related testimony in their deliberations. The jury deliberated for five hours and delivered a "not guilty" verdict based on a technicality stemming from the fact that the occupiers were arrested on railroad rather than utility property. A poll of jurors showed that, had they been permitted to recognize the choice of evils law, the not guilty verdict would have come "in five minutes."

Even at that the TDA's Margot Saegre hailed the verdict as "a great victory," and the Portland General Electric Company, Trojan's owner, seemed to agree. The decision, said public relations director Steven Loy, would probably "create some enthusiasm" for new occupations. According to TDA sources, another one is being planned.

Indeed, through the widely divergent conduct and outcomes of the various trials, one theme is clear—most or all the occupiers seem intent on returning to their neighboring nuclear sites. Early in May, simultaneous civil disobedience actions are planned at the Barnwell-Aiken weapons-waste storage facility in South Carolina, and at the Rocky Flats weapons-plutonium processing plant in Colorado. Later in the month, the Mobilization for Survival, a national coalition, will sponsor a mass march on the United Nations to demand nuclear disarmament. By the time of the June Seabrook occupation, more than a score of other anti-nuclear actions are likely.

Thus, 1978 promises to be a bad year for the nuclear industry. Faced with legal challenges at all levels of the courts on topics ranging from insurance to fuel supply to plant effluents to construction costs and sagging electrical demand, the industry may be providing as many jobs for lawyers as for construction workers.

With explosions like those at Millstone and Vernon becoming increasingly noticed, with rate hikes coming under sharp attack, with postponements of construction increasing, and with just seven new domestic orders logged in the last two years, the nuclear industry must indeed see 1978 as the year that could make it or break it.

But despite its hard times, the industry is not likely to surrender. An assault on state siting councils and utilities commissions, a drive for licensing easements, and massive lobbying for huge federal tax credits and subsidies are the least we can expect from both reactor producers and utilities.

If the trials and new occupation plans of anti-nuclear activists are any indicator, 1978 could also witness a matured nationwide anti-nuclear campaign. Part of that maturity will come in recognizing that, while atomic energy may well be on the defensive, it is still far from open retreat. □

COMMUNISTS, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS & FOGGY BOTTOM

THE DANGER OF CHAOS IN ITALY

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

Rome, January 2

The city of the Popes has a considerable experience of anathema and, a fortnight after the event, a secularized Italy has taken Washington's condemnation of the Italian Communist Party with a large serenity. A Mediterranean shrug, expressing some irritation and no little contempt, has been the response to the declaration that the United States does not favor the participation of the Communists in government. The Communists, Socialists, Republicans and sectors of opinion which even the State Department's Italian desk (its incumbents fitted ex officio with tinted glasses) would describe as "moderate" have protested. The Christian Democrats have insisted, above all to the Communists, that they did not solicit the intervention. The competence and judgment of Ambassador Gardner has been questioned, publicly in the press, privately by the political elite. The occasion for Washington's statement was, of course, a serious political crisis, and no one can say how it will end. But for the moment the American intervention has made matters easier for the Communist Party.

Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti has resigned. The Communists, Socialists and Republicans have withdrawn their support for his government and have asked to be included in a new Cabinet. The President of the Republic has asked Andreotti to form the next government, and Andreotti is trying to convince his party that the Communists will have to be included in any new majority. (Along with the other parties, they had supported Andreotti by not voting against him.) Because the political forces are of approximately equal weight,

Norman Birnbaum, professor of sociology at Amherst College, was in Bonn, Paris and Rome in January. He recently edited Beyond the Crisis *for Oxford University Press.*

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there are very few other alternatives. The Christian Democrats at first threatened the Communists and Socialists with the dissolution of Parliament and new elections. The Left and lay parties responded by declaring that the inability of a party that represents 38 per cent of the electorate to form a government gives no constitutional grounds for new elections: the Christian Democrats had no divine right to office. These parties—with 47 percent of the vote—have told the President that, before he dissolves Parliament, they expect to be asked to form a government. The President, Giovanni Leone, is a constitutional lawyer, and would presumably agree. But Leone is also a moral and political cripple, whose term ends in December and who is subject to blackmail by his own party (the Christian Democrats). The State Department, explaining its opposition to the Communists, said that we shared values with the Italians. Apparently, we share a wide spectrum of values with them, since Leone's problem is that he desperately fears indictment for bribery by Lockheed. It is uncertain, therefore, that he will follow the constitutional rules even though the Left-lay bloc is close to a potential majority in the Chamber.

But in any case, the Christian Democrats do not hold a very strong hand. Some of them (in particular, Aldo Moro) have Presidential ambitions. Carter may think that his own chances of re-election will be enhanced by a return to the old ways of dogmatic anti-communism. In Italy, however, Presidents are elected by the Chamber and the Senate, in which the Left now has nearly half the votes. The Christian Democrats, with an eye upon December, cannot alienate the Communists and Socialists. One understands why our Ambassador has found their anti-Communist zeal not quite up to the Trilateral Commission's standards.

These details of Italian politics are banal. The social and political troubles of Italy will not respond to vulgar political maneuvers, nor to the sorts of ritual incantation to which our policy makers have regressed. There is a tragicomic rigor to the course of events. For years, we backed the Christian Democrats. That their corruption and incapacity were carrying their country to the brink of the abyss mattered less than their tradition of servility to our policy. Now that the opportunism of some Christian Democrats, and the good sense of others, have attenuated their anti-communism, the United States finds itself almost without interlocutors in a friendly country. We may expect a well-orchestrated campaign to depict the Christian Democrats as vacillating or worse, because some of them prefer negotiating with the Communists to chaos.

The danger of chaos is real. Most European commentators dismiss the State Department's declaration as amateurish improvisation, hit upon in panic when it was discovered that half the Italian electorate refuses to disappear. Upon his return to Rome after consultations in Washington, our Ambassador uttered what was interpreted here as a threat of economic blackmail. The CIA could no doubt find several candidates for the role of an Italian Pinochet. Our government is behaving with a maximum of irresponsibility and a minimum of foresight in a situation that is difficult enough. If the United States wills an Italian civil war, it can have one—but it is by no means certain that the Right will win. If our government seeks other solutions, it would do well to pay some attention to the historical details of the Italian situation.

The world economic recession has had serious effects on Italy. Migrant workers have returned from northern Europe, exports have declined, investment has been reduced. Inflation is very high, for two reasons. One is that the Italian unions won for their members relatively high wages and social benefits, which were conceded by public and private enterprise on the assumption that the economy would continue to grow. Another is that political clientelism and parasitism (in which the Christian Democrats are world champions) have been draining the economy. Unemployment is high, and the situation of young workers is desperate. The explosive social consequences are already visible in criminality and political violence. The recession coincided in any event with the end of a cycle of growth which left Italy devoid of an adequate infrastructure of public goods and services. However, both long-term reforms and short-term economic measures depend on a new political consensus—or a continuation of the shift to the Left evident in the regional elections of 1975 and the parliamentary ones of 1976.

The Left might have formed a government in 1976 and initiated a program combining cyclical measures and structural reforms. It did not, because the Communist Party preferred to pursue the "Historical Compromise" with the Christian Democrats. A short-term economic agreement among the Communists, Christian Democrats and other constitutional parties had been completed by their experts just as Andreotti resigned. The unions have said that they will negotiate a "Social Contract"—but not with the Christian Democrats alone; they want Communist and Socialist ministers as their interlocutors. Negotiations for a merger of Communist, Catholic and Socialist unions have slowed, but their unity of action has been reinforced. In the circumstances, a good many of Italy's entrepreneurs and managers favor the inclusion of the Left parties in government. Some of their spokesmen—like Guido Carli, president of the Italian equivalent of the National Association of Manufacturers, and Gianni Agnelli of the family that owns Fiat—have recently taken ambiguous positions. Originally, they intimated that they favored a larger political consensus. Possibly, they have been talked to rather strenuously by their overseas friends. On the other hand, Ugo LaMalfa, who as head of the Republican Party, speaks for a lay and liberal tradition to which many on the Borghese are attached, has abandoned his previous opposition to the inclusion of the Communists. Indeed, he now declares it to be a precondition of any solution to the Italian crisis. He adds that the Communists give ample evidence of having changed.

LaMalfa speaks for a widening sector of opinion which holds that the Communists are a force for the order needed to restore the authority of the state. Italy suffers not only economic problems and political stalemate but a deep loss of confidence in its institutions.

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A series of trials has demonstrated that many of the terrorists of Left and Right are double agents of either military intelligence or the police. Another series of judicial inquiries is unlikely ever to come to trial—those that would expose the inordinate corruption of the Christian Democrats. The Socialists were similarly tempted when in government—and did not entirely resist. More recently, some Communist local officials have been accused of too much devotion to the idea of a mixed economy: they took bribes from local business. In the ensuing moral and political vacuum, previously marginal political forces have emerged. A *Lumpenproletariat* of the unemployed, poor students, workers on the labor black market (without union or legal protection) has added to the anxieties of the middle classes, themselves hard-pressed by inflation. Some of those marginal groups have joined elements of the middle class in the neo-Fascist movement. Others have declared themselves to be "autonomists" and they are indeed autonomous with respect to the restraints of culture and society. These pseudo-leftists have vied with the Fascists to create a climate of disorder, uncertainty and violence. No doubt, both groups have been penetrated by persons who have manipulated them for their own ends: chaos and a recourse to the armed forces to defend "law and order." Manipulation and penetration, however, can work only because the opportunities are so many.

Negotiations for a new government are likely to last for some weeks: each of the major protagonists suffers from internal divisions. The Christian Democrats say officially that they are unwilling to accept the Communists as governmental partners. They claim to be confident about the outcome of elections, should Parliament be dissolved. If elections were held, however, each of the two major parties might gain a few percentage points at the expense of the smaller ones—leaving the balance of forces unchanged, but the situation more polarized. Some Christian Democrats think that this might not be the worst result. They could then tell the Americans that they had done their best, but that now the Communists would have to come into government. Old leaders like Aldo Moro and Amitore Fanfani (once on our Embassy's payroll) seem willing to be forced to accept Communist ministers.

A group of younger Christian Democratic hard-liners, located in the north, threatens to split the party if that happens. Our Embassy seems to have had a good deal of contact with this group, and rather less with its traditional clients. (Moro complained of "insufficient" contact with the Ambassador.) If the Embassy thinks that this group is likely to assume command of the party, it is making a serious mistake. The Catholic Church is unlikely to follow these northern managers and technicians into a battle on behalf of a vision of society quite alien to Catholic social traditions. The Right in the Church, led by Cardinal Benelli of Florence, may collaborate with such forces, but other Catholics are shocked by their political authoritarianism and secularism. The development of a new Catholic political idea will take time, but some of the newer figures in the party have very good relations with the Communists—party Secretary Zaccagnini amongst them. The outcome of the current division among the Christian Democrats is impossible to predict, but the Left and lay parties increasingly think that the last thing the Christian Democrats will do is leave government. The most effective means of pressure on them, then, is the threat of an alternative majority.

When the Communist Party evoked that possibility a week ago, it marked a major rhetorical departure from the strategy of Historical Compromise pursued untiringly by Berlinguer since 1973. It was Berlinguer himself who raised the issue—after months of pressure from his own electorate, from the unions and from the party itself. The regional secretaries of the party (those implanted in the areas it actually governs) had insisted, days previously, that the party should either enter government or go over to true opposition. The creation of a Left and lay government, let it be said, would not entail the loss of any hope that the Christian Democrats would agree to share office with the Left. The Communist Party's critics have been saying for some time that its slogan, "Party of Combat and of Government," is absurd—it is neither a party of combat nor of government. Its demand to be included in a new government reflects two developments. One is that Berlinguer and his faction in the party consider that the Christian Democrats have been less than scrupulous in honoring the spirit of the agreement they made with the other parties. The other—in part the result of Christian Democratic hedging—is that Communist voters and an entire range of Left and lay opinion think the party ought to call the Christian Democrats' bluff. The latter want the other parties to share responsibility for government, but not power within it. Put in another way: just when the State Department was denouncing the Communists for unremitting Leninism, the leadership was altering its policy in response to pressure from both its members and public opinion.

Again, no one can say what compromises the Communists will now make. Ambassador Gardner originally asked the Christian Democrats not to allow the Communists to participate in an enlarged majority, or to join an interparty committee to control policy, or to name technocrats sympathetic to the Communists to ministries. These steps would bring the Communists too close to office, the Embassy warned. As a result of our intervention, these are now the minimal concessions the Communists can accept.

Where, in all of this, are the Socialists? The answer is simple—they are at one another's throats. A bitter dispute has divided a party which should be playing a major role as the guardian of the Italian tradition of democratic socialism. A number of intellectuals still think of themselves as Socialist; so do an influential group of union leaders. The difficulty is that the Socialist electorate has been eroding and its support in the working class is thin. The Socialists are the primary targets, perhaps, of the Christian Democratic threat to call elections: they might in that event lose nearly half their voters to the Communists. The present dispute within the party

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Bas, Tachydromos (Greece)

centers ostensibly on the kind of political autonomy the Socialists should put forward. One faction thinks the party should develop another Socialist alternative, to try to recover ground and confront the Communists eventually on more nearly equal terms. Another thinks that it should constitute a nucleus for a democratic socialist grouping which could merge in the distant future with a reformed Communist Party. The first group accuses the second of being too close to the Communists, and the second intimates that the first is all too willing to make a deal with Christian Democrats. For the moment, there is no chance of that arrangement, and the Socialists have pressed the Communists to demand more on behalf of the entire Left.

With the Socialists ineffective as a major component of the Left and lay bloc, a large role has fallen to political leaders of high individual prestige. LaMalfa's influence cannot be gauged from the 3 percent of the electorate that backs his party, and the former President of the Republic, Giuseppe Saragat, speaks for a larger group than the small remnant of Social Democrats. Within political Catholicism, a priest like the reflective Jesuit, Father Bartolomeo Sorge, has as much influence as any two currents in the Christian Democratic Party itself. The technocratic elite has its spokesmen, and I have already mentioned some of the businessmen. It is common enough to speak of Italy as a society without a state, and to think of it as governed by arrangements between parties for the division of the spoils. What is now obvious is that there is an active and critical public opinion. Its diversity does not mean that it is fragmented. Very different groups understand one another rather well, and are in constant touch. Curiously, it is in response to this phenomenon that American officialdom and some of our correspondents in Rome have fallen back on the assertion that the Italian media, and Italian culture generally, are dominated by "leftists." A "leftism" that extends into the Italian Bishops' Conference is, perhaps, historically novel—but the ideological inventiveness of some of our own countrymen is limitless. Their response is perhaps to be explained by the development of a specific consensus among the Italian elites. The view that the Communist Party is genuinely national, that it is on the road to democratization, and that it should be included in government is now prevalent.

The rise of an articulate public opinion has not made matters unequivocally easy for the Communists. Those who vote Communist are by no means dependent upon the party's media for their information. The Italian working class is very cosmopolitan: millions of Italians have worked in Belgium, France, Germany and Switzerland. Many Italian workers know a good deal more about the world than do, for instance, solid members of the American middle class. The pressure on the Communist and Socialist Parties, on the political elite as a whole, from the unions comes from the aspirations of a changed working class—aspirations for full citizenship as well as for material well-being. The present govermental crisis can be traced back to a rally last December of metallurgical workers in the Piazza San Giovanni Laterno. Two hundred thousand members of Italy's most powerful union converged on Rome (which has little industry) to demand real changes in state and society.

American opinion is obsessed by the Italian Communist Party. Some 47 percent of the Parliament has said that the party should now enter government. The 38 percent represented by the Christian Democrats is divided—with perhaps a third of it proclaiming irrevocable opposition to the Communists. The former Fascist Party has split into two components, one seeking reconciliation with the Christian Democrats and the other more or less openly advocating violence and civil war. Together, they have about 8 percent of the Parliament. No doubt, our Embassy could suggest an anti-Communist majority of the Christian Democrats, the Fascists and a few fragments of other parties (the Liberals and the Social Democrats). Many of the Christian Democrats, however, are anti-Fascist. In any event, the improbable emergence of a parliamentary majority of that sort would increase the instability of Italy tenfold.

As I write, negotiations are continuing. Berlinguer has reiterated the Communist demand for inclusion in government. He has also criticized the Socialists for lack of tactical solidarity with the Communists. Meanwhile, the Catholic and Socialist unionists have abused Communist union leader Luciano Lama for declaring that the workers would have to make sacrifices to restore Italy's economy. The attack has been joined, vociferously, by other Communist unionists and the rank and file. "What we would not take ten years ago from the Christian Democrats," one of them said, "we won't accept today from the Communists, either." His critics accuse Lama of readiness to deal over the heads of the workers to strengthen the position of the Communist Party. The Italian Bishops, after internal argument, have declared that they are unconvinced that the Communists have changed, and that they see no reason why anything else should change, either. Thus, it is far from certain that the Communists can impose the Historical Compromise upon their own voters and unwilling partners.

Against this background, the American declaration

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appears particularly reckless. It implies a series of steps leading to the economic ruin of Italy, pervasive destabilization and a right-wing military coup that would indeed guarantee Italy's position in NATO. It would also guarantee the disintegration of the Atlantic Alliance. Challenged in the Bundestag the other day to endorse the American declaration, Helmut Schmidt ostentatiously refused. The Social Democratic and Socialist governments and parties of the rest of Europe (and most of the others) will not tolerate a repetition of the Chilean experience in Western Europe. The total independnce, or isolation, of Italy is of course an illusion. But its links with Western Europe are at least as important to it as are those it has maintained with the United States. West European solidarity is a reality, and a diplomacy which has overlooked that can only be deemed stupid. □

CARTER'S CIRCULAR BRUSHOFF

RETREAT FROM NATIONAL HEALTH

LEONARD ROBINS

It is now evident that the Carter administration is searching for a way out of the commitment made by candidate Carter to fight for a strong national health insurance program. The current tactic is to delay the introduction of national health insurance legislation until late in 1978 with the explicit wish that it not be considered during the current Congressional session. More fundamentally, the administration seems willing to delay implementation of national health insurance until sometime in the 1980s and to accept any small, halfway measures as a sign of gradual progress. If these views prevail, the net result may well be to abandon the last great unfinished piece of welfare legislation envisioned in Roosevelt's New Deal.

Carter's people do not, of course, use these terms to describe the retreat. Instead, emphasis is being given to the argument that medical-care costs must be controlled before national health insurance is introduced, lest we suffer once again the fraud and cost explosion that followed the introduction of Medicare and Medicaid. But that is a curious argument to hear from avowed supporters of national health insurance. It ignores one of the most compelling arguments for the comprehensive approach favored by the Committee for National Health Insurance (founded by Walter Reuther and now headed by the current president of the United Automobile Workers, Douglas Fraser), and embodied in the Kennedy/Corman bill—which is that basic changes in the organization and public financing of medical care are the prerequisites for controlling the costs of medical care. As Dr. George Silver pointed out in an earlier article in *The Nation* ("The System Is the Sickness," September 10, 1977) ". . . the official reasoning seems to run in a circle of this sort: costs cannot be brought under control until the system is reorganized, but steps toward a national system that will provide for this reorganization cannot be taken until costs are under control."

Moreover, the administration's own plan to take a step toward control of medical-care costs by attempting to place a 9 percent ceiling on hospital cost increases shows the failure of this strategy. The proposal has made absolutely no headway in Congress, and has been criticized on all sides as an attempt to deal with an isolated sympton, rather than the causes of increased medical-care costs.

The Carter retreat on national health insurance should come as no surprise. As President he has never been strongly committed to national health insurance, and when he was campaigning for the office his support of legislation in this area was similar to his support of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill—late, grudging and forthcoming only during the heat of the crucial Pennsylvania primary, when it seemed necessary to demonstrate a commitment to major social reform. Later, this commitment was reinforced by the pressure on Carter from his strongest union supporters, the UAW and its then President Leonard Woodcock.

We know the outcome of Humphrey-Hawkins. Enormous pressure by a united liberal-labor-black coalition met strong resistance in the White House, and a resulting compromise ensued in which President Carter endorsed a watered-down version of the original legislation. There is a real question whether this should be considered a victory for supporters of Humphrey-Hawkins. In any case, the proponents deserve great credit for their perseverance and for using campaign promises and the Democratic Party's platform as bargaining tools to obtain at least some action from the new administration. (See "The Promise of Humphrey-Hawkins" by Dorothy R. Steffens, *The Nation,* January 21.)

A similar compromise on national health insurance could in no way be construed as even a partial victory for those committed to a major reorganization of our medical-care system. The lesson to be learned from the failures of Medicare and Medicaid (partial changes in the means of financing, deliberately designed not to affect the medical-care delivery ssytem) is that whatever the benefits of incremental reform in other areas of social policy, piecemeal change in our way of financing medical care is not only inadequate, it is typically

Leonard Robins teaches courses in health planning and policy in the School of Urban Sciences, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle.

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dysfunctional. Yet there is a real danger that that is exactly what we are about to get.

Despite many avowals to the contrary, it is a good bet that the next piecemeal change in our medical-care financing system will be the enactment of catastrophe insurance—that is, protection against unexpected and devastating medical expenses. Its political attractiveness is obvious: it would both relieve some of the worst fears of the American people and would initially cost the U.S. Treasury only a few billion dollars. It would, unfortunately, itself be a catastrophe.

Catastrophe insurance is not merely insufficient, it is wrong in both theory and practice. First, it continues the illusion that better health can be attained primarily by an increased use of medical technology and drugs rather than through changes in the physical and social environment and personal life styles. Second, it reinforces the American practice of discouraging preventive medicine by continuing the pattern of requiring individuals to pay fully for initial medical expenses. Finally, while it may seem that crisis medicine is a finite quantity, in contrast, for example, to the unneeded and hence unnecessarily dangerous tonsillectomies encouraged by our fee-for-service system of paying physicians and hospitals, the fact is, as the renal dialysis program and the case of Karen Ann Quinlan demonstrate, that physicians can always find more procedures to perform in the name of a one-in-a-million chance. The availability of catastrophe insurance would further stimulate the increasing prevelance of high-cost/low-benefit medicine.

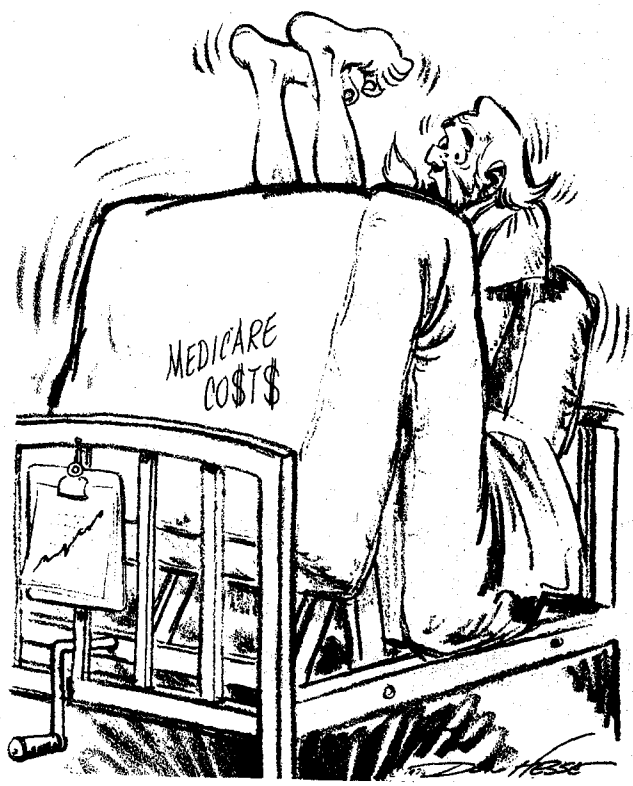
In short, the financial relief for the few made possible by catastrophe insurance would be purchased at the expense of major cost increases for us all and the reinforcement of the worst aspects of our medical-care system. Only those who take the sardonic view that increasing the faults of our medical-care system is beneficial because it will increase the outcry for major change should be encouraged by the possibility of its enactment.

Any attempt to renew the drive for a strong and comprehensive program of national health insurance (Kennedy/Corman) will probably have to accomplish three major tasks—two dealing with the subject directly and one dealing with broad social policy.

The first, paradoxically, is to develop an acceptable fallback position. It is most improbable that a comprehensive national health insurance program can be passed in the next two or three years, even if the present administration swings over to a position of enthusiastic support. However, something is likely to be done in this period, because politicians will want to run for office claiming that they acted on behalf of the people's health. What we need, therefore, are policies and proposals that pave the way for an effective, comprehensive national health insurance system, rather than counterproductive measures that would delude people into thinking that the main problems of a medical-care system had been solved. The key strategy here is to resist an add-on program for everybody (catastrophe insurance) and to get behind a comprehensive program of medical-care financing and organizational reform for a selected population. Dr. Silver's previously mentioned article suggested that a comprehensive national health insurance program should begin with children, and there are strong reasons for agreeing with him. Pediatric care differs qualitatively from medical care for adults in its emphasis on prevention and ambulatory care rather than on acute care and hospitalization. Moreover, changing demographic patterns suggest that we may soon be having a surplus of pediatricians. For these and other reasons, it seems likely that the public would most strongly support, and the providers would be least likely to resist, changes in the financing and delivery of medical care for children.

It will be tragic if all the groups in favor of improved medical care at lower cost should fall back to a position that leads away from their ultimate goal—national health insurance. Unfortunately, the current distrust between proponents of Kiddiecare and of Kennedy/Corman (charges of political naiveté and sellout are common) have hampered each, and thereby made resistance to catastrophe insurance more difficult. What is needed is an integration of the two approaches that recognizes both the probable need to begin with the children and the logical progress from Kiddiecare to a comprehensive national health insurance system for all.

More fundamentally important for the success of national health insurance, however, is the development of a powerful, grass-roots social movement intensely committed to restructuring the medical-care system. Comparing today's debate over national health insurance with the struggle in the early 1960s over Medicare, one is struck by the absence of passion in the current controversy. A clear majority is, and has been for some time, in favor of national health insurance, just as a clear majority was in favor of Medicare. Up to



St. Louis Globe-Democrat

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now, however, no group has assumed a role similar to that played by the National Council of Senior Citizens in the Medicare struggle. Until a similar group emerges to symbolize and dramatize the failings of today's medical-care system, the organized interests committed to the status quo may continue to resist change, withstanding the "objective forces" that make it increasingly necessary.

The problem in developing such a movement is that the main failing of our medical-care system—built-in incentives for ever rising medical-care costs—is effectively hidden by the variety of parties responsible for payment: individuals, private insurers, state and local governments and the national government. This variety prevents the public from grasping the true costs of medical care and weakens the sense of urgency for overall change. Yet despite the difficulties, the building of a committed constituency for national health insurance is essential.

Nothwithstanding these problems, it would be an error to focus only on the tactical mistakes or the general weakness of the movement for national health insurance. It was wise to emphasize the importance of forcing the Democratic Party and President Carter to go on record in support of that insurance. Moreover, the view that health care is a right continues to gain acceptance, and the organized supporters of national health insurance now have more political weight than do its opponents. The American Medical Association, in particular, is much less influential since it lost the fight against Medicare.

The main reason why the campaign for national health insurance does not pick up speed is unlikely to be found in an analysis of the specific questions of health policy and politics. Instead, this failure is probably part of the current disbelief in governmental intervention as an effective approach to any social problems, part of a general concern with, to use Nathan Glazer's phrase, "the limits of social policy." Ultimately, therefore, the main task of those favoring comprehensive reform in our system of medical-care financing and organization will be to challenge and change the current "neo-conservative" mood of the country.

This mood is particularly harmful to the cause of national health insurance. While an effective health insurance program should, at most, increase health-care costs only very marginally at the start, and is essential to cost control in the long run, it would mean a massive shift in expenditures from private and state and local budgets to the national budget. Thus, it has the appearance of being a truly vast new undertaking. In a period of economic trouble, when the Carter administration is preoccupied with holding down *federal* expenditures and balancing the *federal* budget, it is easy to argue that the time is especially not right for this new social program.

But at the heart of the problem are not economic facts but social values. If the will, belief and commitment to national health insurance were present, the obvious superficiality of focusing on federal expenditures for health, rather than on total health expenditures, could be easily exposed. How the current mood of social-policy conservatism, widespread in the American people and present to a disappointing degree within the Carter administration, is to be overcome is beyond the scope of this article. But at least the proponents of national health insurance will be more effective if they recognize the influence of the social-policy climate on their struggle.

Under present circumstances, therefore, we must expect that issues like national health insurance will be unresolved for quite some time. Without in any way minimizing the importance of electoral politics, it must be recognized that victories at the polls are not enough. Resisting social change is easy; promoting change requires more than assigning Democrats to the seats of power. □

THE SIERRA CLUB'S JOB PACKAGE

An Environmental Works Program

NEIL B. GOLDSTEIN and SAMUEL H. SAGE

Billions of dollars are spent each year for federal public works projects throughout the United States. This fiscal year, for example, Congress has made available $9.89 billion for transportation construction projects, $2.1 billion for dams and waterways, $4 billion for capital assistance to local governments through the Public Works Employment Act and billions more through the bloc grants program of the Community Housing and Development Act. Despite these very large disbursements, our public works program isn't getting done the job it was set up to do.

Urban unemployment stands well above the already-too-high 6.4 percent national average; transportation and housing remain inadequate for many Americans, and the vision that postwar budget surpluses could be put to work rebuilding our cities and countryside has somehow been lost. In part, failures persist because the funding, though large, is yet insufficient for the monumental tasks. In part too, they may be the result of overambitious goals. But in large measure, one must attribute these failures to misdirection and lack of imagination in the formulation of the nation's public works program. The multibillion-dollar National Defense Highway System, one example of an ill-conceived public work, has sped the decline of cities and the deterioration of mass

Neil Goldstein represents the Sierra Club on national conservation issues from the club's New York office. Samuel Sage is the Sierra Club's water-pollution task force chairman and chairman of its Atlantic chapter.

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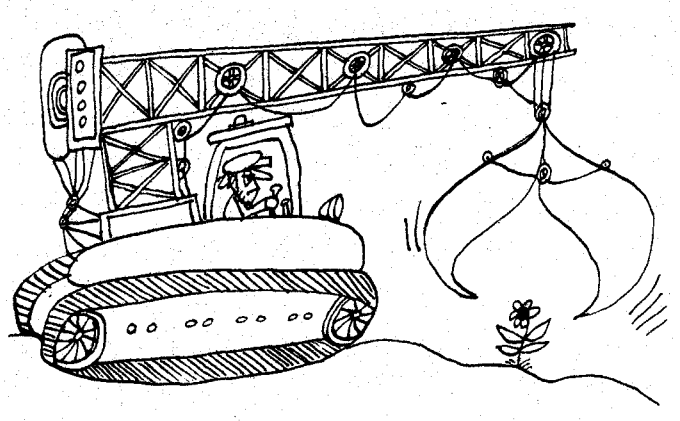
transit and rail freight by assisting in the development of competing, previously undeveloped nonurban areas and by providing a hidden subsidy to auto and truck transport. Park and wilderness advocates at Overton Park, Tenn.; Allaire State Park, N.J.; Franconia Notch, N.H. and dozens of other places charge as well that the nation's highway construction program often directly damages the environment by tearing up park land and forests.

Other programs have failed to set clear national goals for the funds available to them, so that, while they may create jobs, the public works they build may themselves be economically or environmentally harmful. For example, expenditures under the Public Works Employment Act, which is supposed to reduce national unemployment, have sometimes financed sprawl-inducing infrastructure development such as roadway or sewer extensions; such constructions can draw middle-income taxpayers and industry from cities where unemployment is highest.



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Now, a number of environmentalists, led by the Sierra Club, have proposed a new set of public works projects which they believe avoids many of the pitfalls of the current program. They have proposed to the Carter administration a package of environmentally beneficial public works, what they call an "environmental works" program. The package contains specific projects and targeted programs to provide energy-efficient transportation; rehabilitate decaying neighborhoods; restore degraded lands, rivers and streams; process solid waste, and reduce air and water pollution. The proposals include several billion dollars of both rural and urban projects to improve *land*scape and *city*scape.

These are not "pie in the sky" ideas. The package has been assembled from currently unfunded projects and programs of AMTRAK, Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA), the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, HUD, National Park Service (NPS) and others. The Sierra group has found, for instance, that the National Park Service has a $2.6 billion backlog of park-improvement projects, and that AMTRAK can identify up to twenty-five intermediate-distance passenger rail corridors where track improvements would make sense, but where funding has not been provided. An UMTA consultant has said that up to twenty cities are suitable candidates for new light rail systems (at $200 million to $300 million each) and that an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) survey of resource recovery plans has spotted more than $660 million in projects that will require private sector or local government financing unless the federal government provides the money. Each of these programs has been proposed for the "environmental works" package.

Other projects that have been identified include: national urban recreation areas at Delaware Water Gap, on the Savannah River, and at several other locations; a Meramec Heritage Riverway in Missouri; a program of national urban cultural parks (like Rep. Paul Tsongas's proposal for the one at Lowell, Mass.); railroad station improvements and grade-crossing safety protection; mass transit to national parks (patterned upon a recently proposed program by Sen. Harrison Williams of New Jersey); increases in HUD Urban Development Action Grants for neighborhood revitalization; land and river restoration on the Kissimmee and Oklawaha Rivers in Florida; larger funds for home insulation; new appropriations for insulating public buildings; restoration of forests and range land (including campground and picnic-area development where appropriate, wilderness restoration, replanting of overgrazed range land, careful hand removal of nonnative vegetation, replanting of clear-cut forest lands, control of erosion on surface-mined lands, freeing debris-clogged streams and correcting erosion due to stream-bed channelization).

The Sierra Club believes that the chances for an environmental works program containing such projects are excellent. Congress recently established a budgetary process that permits a more rational review of national budgeting priorities, and President Carter has made clear his support for environmental programs and his belief in the importance of resource conservation for long-term economic strength. There are already some signs of success; Katherine Fletcher of the White House staff has said that the President's Council on Environmental Quality is pursuing the idea of an environmentally beneficial public works program along the lines here suggested. The idea has also elicited some Congressional support and legislation may well be introduced this session.

This encouraging response reflects the many natural advantages of the concept: environmental works can create jobs; indeed the plans cited above would create more jobs for each dollar spent than does the current public works program. Environmentalists would be willing to support environmental work projects, whereas they oppose and attempt to stop many of the damaging projects of the nation's current public works program. Proposed undertakings would employ many people who are now employed in public works construction, and organized labor's demand for construction jobs could be met without running into environmental opposition. And, finally, there are projects in every region and state, so a politically and economically acceptable balance can be achieved.

But while general support for environmental works has been easy to find, cooperation from within the

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administration for specific projects has proven more elusive. Departments of the government that face limited budgetary prospects are unwilling to push their backlog of environmentally beneficial programs because these would take money from their higher priority plans. The crux of the problem is that there has been no Presidential or Congressional mandate to reallocate money from one department to another, so that environmentally desirable projects could be funded.

The National Park Service, for example, has had to set priorities for its limited funds by comparing its own programs with one another, not by comparing the value of park improvement with the environmentally harmful roadway or dam construction of other agencies. Within the constraints placed upon them by their limited budgets NPS, AMTRAK and other agencies have been forced to place environmentally beneficial public works low on their list when preparing budget requests. Often these projects have been omitted altogether. These worthwhile proposals will remain in agency backlogs until there is a major reordering of the nation's public works to permit significantly increased support of environmentally beneficial undertakings.

In the face of this agency hesitancy, a new evaluation of the nation's public works priorities could easily become derailed. For instance, despite assurances by Katherine Fletcher that "the Council on Environmental Quality is pursuing the ideas you have presented in a major effort along the lines the Sierra Club has suggested," Dr. Edwin Clark of CEQ says that the council has been stymied to date in compiling a list of environmental works projects.

Others, though, have tried harder and gotten substantially further. One Congressional office that assigned staff full time to the project has explored virtually every one of the suggested programs. The staff has just completed a detailed options paper outlining the merit of projects, their political viability and the legislative approaches to be followed in each project area. It is from this paper that legislation will probably follow during this session. In anticipation of Congressional action, several environmentalists, including Brent Blackwelder of the Environmental Policy Center in Washington, have begun a series of workshops to explain to the public why our nation's public works program must be changed.

Of course, the reordering of the nation's public works priorities will be a long and difficult process. While the "environmental works" idea has generally been well-received, it has not yet attracted the kind of support that developed over the years for the current type of public works: dam and highway construction, local capital development assistance, and many other programs that enjoy the backing of powerful labor and construction industry lobbies and of local government officials. However, environmentally beneficial public works would aid many of the same industries and workers who now profit from public works projects, and the Sierra group hopes to transfer their support to the type of enterprises it advocates. Inertia may be the greatest obstacle, and only if the public demands a reordering of the nation's public works program will it be overcome. Only then can the country secure passage of a public works program to provide a congenial, healthy and safe environment for all its people. □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 130)*

stems not from social philosophies but from the fact that much bigger, stronger and faster men are competing for maneuvering space in the same restricted area as did smaller, slower men in a more deliberately paced game decades ago. But there is a monumental difference between body contact around the basket and an attempt to maim or destroy someone.

As McWilliams must know in his usual lucid moments, there are many self-disciplined men of character in professional sports and there are a few self-indulgent thugs. Kermit Washington is a thug. One of sports' strongest men, he knows the destructive potential of his punch, and was guilty in another incident before almost killing the arms-down Tomjanovich. He deserved at least the penalties imposed against him, and a whopping civil suit by the victim would also seem in order.

Things wrong with American sports are a proper subject for a serious magazine. But spare us the embarrassing jargon of rote "social" comment where it has no basis.

Lester Rodney

New York City

In brief rebuttal:

(*1*) I must firmly reject the inference in Mr. Rodney's letter that I have "an elitist disdain for sports." As a one-time fair fielding but wretched hitting substitute third baseman and a left end who could catch passes but missed more than his share of tackles I think I qualify as an amateur sports fan.

(*2*) That there is far too much violence in professional sports, particularly football and basketball, is not a notion I invented. The sports pages have echoed with discussions of the issue for months. When football players boast of the violent tactics they propose to use in upcoming games the effect, obviously, is to encourage violence. Thus Lyle Alzado of the Denver Broncos explains that he likes to spit on his opposite number, just by way of evidencing a friendly, sportsmanlike attitude; while Cliff Harris, the Dallas free safety, explains how he uses his helmet as a combat weapon. "I've made a study of it. I know the best angle of hitting, for getting the maximum power into a lick." No doubt some fans abhor violence in sports but many love it. Fans will boo an ice hockey game in which there is not at least one good brawl; that is what some of them came to see.

(*3*) As for "the jackpot syndrome," what I had in mind is an aspect of professional sports that has received maximum attention of recent weeks and months. Managers must hit the jackpot or out they go, along with coaches, assistants and players. Money has always been the "name of the game" in professional sports, but as the size of the jackpot has increased so has the frenzy, the violence and the brutal cynicism—all of it, in my view, damaging to sports.

(*4*) Finally I do not agree with Mr. Rodney that Kermit Washington is "a thug." He is no more a thug than is Mean Joe Greene of the Pittsburgh Steelers, who is generally conceded to be a very pleasant, mild-mannered gentleman when he is not playing professional football.

Carey McWilliams

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Coast Is Not Clear: Chileans in Exile

VICTOR PERERA

The first thing to say about Chilean expatriate writers is that most of them are writing; half a dozen significant works of fiction and nonfiction (excluding journalism) on the Allende period and its aftermath have already appeared, and at least as many more are expected.

To judge from the works I have read, it also appears evident that the recent Chilean drama is still too raw and too far-reaching in scope and implications for any one book, and probably any one writer, to encompass. This is still a time for rendering testimony, and too early for drawing dispassionate conclusions. But the aftershocks continue to leave their mark on contemporary history as well as on the informed individual conscience, as Chile takes on a stubborn, tragic mystique akin to that of the Spanish Civil War.

Over the past two years I have met with Chilean writers living in Latin America, in the United States and in Europe. Most of them had been sympathetic to Allende's socialist government and although only one, Hernán Valdés, suffered imprisonment and torture for his political beliefs, the rest bear the wounds of profound disappointment and exile.

I met Ariel Dorfman in Paris, where he works for the Center for the Defense of Chilean Culture, which aims at keeping a revolutionary culture alive within Chile by organizing clandestine literary, artistic and musical workshops, awarding scholarships and subsidizing semi-legal publications critical of the junta. During Allende's administration, Dorfman, who is of German-Jewish descent and speaks excellent English, staged imaginative media "blitzes" to popularize the government's land-reform and other programs and worked to democratize TV, radio and films after years of control by an elitist minority.

Dorfman has written a prize-winning novel on the Chilean Revolution, *Moros en la Costa (The Coast Is Not Clear)*, and a number of short stories. But his best-known work by far is *How to Read Donald Duck*—co-authored with Armand Mattelart—a trenchant satirical essay on the covert imperialistic designs of Walt Disney, as expressed through the rascally schemes of Donald's skinflint uncle Scrooge McDuck, and the seemingly ingenuous machinations of Donald's three nephews.

How to Read Donald Duck would seem little more than a clever exercise were it not for the pervasive popularity enjoyed by Disney characters throughout Latin America, where they reach and influence a vast nonliterate public. Dorfman and Mattelart wrote this book in reaction to a cartoon figure they regarded as an embodiment of the principles of capitalistic ideology, and a formidable adversary of Allende's revolution. After the military takeover, *How to Read Donald Duck* was one of the first books to be seized and publicly burned by the junta.

How to Read Donald Duck, which was a best seller in Latin America and in parts of Europe, was until recently tied up in customs in the United States, because of an alleged patent infringement. A lower court ruled in its favor, and at least 1,200 copies have been released for distribution. Attorneys for Walt Disney are appealing the court decision.

Dorfman has settled temporarily in Amsterdam, where he recently completed a mordant satirical novel on post-Allende Chile, *Chilex and Company: A New Guide*, which will be published in England by Marion Boyers, and is being adapted for radio by the BBC. Dorfman also keeps up with his political activities, with much of the dedication but a good deal less élan than in the Allende years.

"I feel like an amputee," he tells me, when we meet in his home. He is a tall, lanky man in his mid-30s bristling with nervous energy. "The experience of defeat is a very bitter one for all of us. And yet, until we comprehend fully the nature of our defeat, and accept it within ourselves, we cannot grow new limbs from our amputated parts. When I escaped from Chile I swore I would never sit on a porch in a foreign country and bemoan my exile. So I work hard to prepare for our eventual return, and to stave off the inevitable depression. But I feel caught between two worlds, two realities. For me exile means having to work with strangers, not from love, or the joy of belonging, but from a dispassionate commitment."

Dorfman is a close friend of Julio Cortazar, the Argentine novelist who is lending wholehearted support to the Chilean resistance. He also keeps close contact with his fellow Chilean writer and friend Antonio Skarmeta, who has settled in West Germany.

I met Antonio Skarmeta in Lima, Peru, where he was collaborating on a film about post-Allende Chile with the West German director Peter Lilienthal. Skarmeta, who is of Yugoslav descent, is a graduate of Columbia University, and has published five well-received collections of short stories. He is in his mid-30s, tall and burly, with a round balding head, a brush mustache and a genial, relaxed manner that contrasts with his friend Dorfman's explosiveness. Like Dorfman, he was a staunch supporter of Allende's government, although he never played an active political role. At the time of the coup he had been a literature professor in the University of Chile.

Last year Skarmeta wrote a radio play on Chile that was broadcast in West Germany, and won the most prestigious European award. He also published his first novel, *Sone que la Nieve Ardia* (*I Dreamed the Snow Burned.*) Arturo, the protagonist of *I Dreamed the Snow Burned*, is a virginal young soccer player who is trying to "make it" in the free-wheeling, idealistic and already doomed Santiago Chile of 1973, during the final stages of Allende's Presidency. The book ends with tanks in the streets, the arrest and torture of Arturo's best friend, the execution of Victor Jara, who is referred to simply as "the poet," and the final disintegration of a mortally stricken but still somehow buoyant socialist culture.

The novel is an at times moving and quietly desperate attempt to recapture the texture and rhythm, the music, the sensuality and the vulgar idiom as well as the binding comradeship that sustained loyal Allendist youth in the months before the military coup. With the exception of Arturo, who is at first too self-centered, the young men and women of *I Dreamed the Snow Burned*

Victor Perera is a novelist and free-lance journalist who teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

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give themselves to each other as wholly and openly as they give themselves to Allende's socialism. That this was not enough to combat the "others," the ones who did not share in the socialist vision, is the central mystery of the novel. But these others do not appear in this book, except as abstractions; we are never shown their faces, and this very refusal to see the enemy, to acknowldege his individual reality, is the underlying burden of this novel. "What was it?" the book seems to ask. "What went wrong?" "What opened the door to such an incommensurate evil?"

The novel itself ends with a question, a tacit admission of the novelist's limitations.

"Then that would be all?" asks the narrator, poised on the far edge of the precipice.

In Spain, in the coastal town of Sitges, south of Barcelona, a substantial community of Chilean writers and artists has developed. On any given day in the narrow, picturesque streets of Sitges, which some Chileans compare favorably to Valparaiso, you might run into José Donoso, the author of *Obscene Bird of Night,* or any one of three or four other important writers as well as cartoonist and artist Fernando Krahn, painter Nemesio Antunez, or world-class symphony conductor Juan Pablo Izquierdo. Most of these writers and artists know each other well, and despite political divergences they convene regularly in one another's homes.

When asked why they have chosen Spain, of all countries, the usual reply is because of the language, and the access to publishers in Barcelona and Madrid. Fernando Krahn, whose cartoons have appeared in *Esquire* and *The New Yorker*, and who spends hours drawing grotesque avian caricatures of Augusto Pinochet and his cohorts, admits the repressive atmosphere of Spain helps him to work by assuaging his survivor's guilt.

José Donoso, whose excellent early novel *Lugar Sin Límites* (*Place Without Limits*) was reissued with considerable fanfare in Spain, is now working, more or less surreptitiously, on his first "political" novel. Donoso is generally regarded as the most distinguished living Chilean novelist. Although he has lived in voluntary exile for years, he has retained his passport, and he recently traveled to Chile to attend his mother's funeral. Donoso, who regards himself as an apolitical man of letters, is coming out increasingly against the junta—"but not in public," as he scrupulously cautioned.

I met with Donoso in his home, where he lives with his wife, Maria Pilar, their young daughter and their extravagantly pampered box terrier. Donoso's deep-set eyes and gray beard make him look years older than 52. He is a Princeton graduate who specialized in 18th-century English literature, as well as in Faulkner, Henry James and Dickens. He has returned to Princeton and to Iowa to teach creative writing courses in English, although all of his own novels and essays are written in his native Spanish. This past summer he published English translations of a novel (*Sacred Families*), his essay on the Latin American literary "boom," and a collection of short stories. Our interview began in Spanish, but we switched to English when we entered sensitive political ground.

"There is a great deal of pressure on me to sign statements against the junta," he says, with an Ivy League inflection in his high-pitched voice. "Writers like Antonio Skarmeta have written scabrous reviews of my work, and denounced me as decadent bourgeois. And Ariel Dorfman called to say he and Julio Cortazar were discussing me and they had decided it was time I 'made my commitment.' Well, I find that outrageous," he says, rising in his seat and peering indignantly out of his horn-rimmed glasses. "A writer is committed only to his vision. If I take any public position on Chile, or on anything else—" he shakes his head emphatically, and tugs at his beard—"it will be in the way I know best: through metaphor."

Donoso would not discuss the political novel he is writing, beyond hinting that it would sharply satirize the military mentality. "If they find out what I'm writing before I get to Chile," he says, placing stress on each syllable, "they-will-have-my-head."

However, very soon after he returned from Chile Donoso visited the Frankfurt Book Fair, where he signed a declaration of solidarity with the Chilean people "in their struggle against the Fascist dictatorship." Among the other signatories were Julio Cortazar and Antonio Skarmeta.

Jorge Edwards, another Princeton alumnus, lives in Barcelona and visits Donoso and other Sitges friends on weekends. He is the author of three short story collections and a novel, *El Peso de la Noche (The Weight of Night)*, which received high praise when it appeared in 1965. Like Donoso, Edwards has retained his Chilean passport. When we met in Barcelona, in the Joan Miró Museum, he described himself as "a voluntary expatriate," and added quickly, "but I am more to the Left than many people think."

Edwards, a dapper man in his mid-40s, with accented jowls and thinning hair, rose within the distinguished tradition of Chilean writer-diplomats that also nurtured Pablo Neruda. Edwards had been a close friend of Neruda's, and he quotes and alludes to him constantly.

In 1970 Allende named Edwards as his first cultural ambassador to Cuba. He was expelled by Fidel Castro a year later for associating with Heberto Padilla, the controversial poet who was persecuted and tried for his "anti-revolutionary" opinions. Edwards recently published a book about his Cuban experience, *Persona Non Grata*, whose climax is a three-and-one-half-hour argument he sustained with Castro about the Padilla case, freedom of expression, Cuban and Chilean socialism. In his account of the debate Edwards comes off very well, of course, and he makes Castro sound like a lively, intelligent, but inflexible apostle of Stalinist doctrine who is contemptuous of "bourgeois" Cuban writers.

Persona Non Grata is far too long-winded and self-absorbed, but it has undoubted historical interest. Without Castro's version of their midnight debate, however, the book is vulnerable to charges of being a self-serving polemic. Edwards has attempted to offset the inevitable accusations from the Left by appending an epilogue to a recent edition of *Persona Non Grata* in which he chastises the despotic mentality of the Chilean junta. But as far as most of his aroused leftist critics are concerned—and there are many—this new epilogue amounts to locking the barn door after the horse has escaped.

Edwards visibly flinched when I brought up these charges of ideological duplicity from the Chilean Left. "My friend Neruda would have appreciated the delicacy of my situation," he said ruefully.

Also in Sitges, but living in virtual isolation, is novelist and poet Hernán Valdés, an Allende supporter who has written a vivid memoir, *Tejas Verdes*, about his experiences in one of the military junta's notorious detention camps. *Tejas Verdes* is the most powerful account of imprisonment and

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torture to have been published thus far by a Chilean exile. It depicts unsparingly the day-by-day degradation he and his fellow inmates were subjected to at the hands of young soldiers of 19 and 20, who had been taught by the military regime to equate all Allende supporters with "*Marxist maricones*," Marxist queers.

Life in these bleak, utterly dehumanizing camps is stripped down to little more than the hourly expectation of torture and/or execution. In the struggle to retain a semblance of dignity, the inmates tell crude jokes and fashion imaginary utopias, or turn for mystical solace to an emaciated follower of the Maharishi whom they call "the guru." After three weeks in the camp, the gentle, spiritual "guru" turned into a hardened revolutionary who believes bourgeois heads will have to roll, as in Cuba. "In this place," says Valdés, "the extravagant, the dreamers, the lukewarm turn into revolutionaries; the revolutionaries, at times, turn into sheep." Reason, sensuality, the imagination itself become hostages to the preoccupation with sleep, food, and voiding body wastes. Tricks of self-humbling are mastered by former high government officials and university professors to cajole sadistic guards into parting with an extra morsel of food, or granting an added fifteen seconds in the latrine.

Valdés poignantly describes the awakening of the imagination, and the seemingly miraculous endurance of the spirit as the body and the ego are progressively broken. But the transcendence is short-lived, for the worst is yet to come. Three weeks after his arrival in *Tejas Verdes* Valdés is called to the dreaded "interrogation room," where he is subjected to new and unimagined trials and humiliations, for which his residence in the camp had only softened him up. After a brutal beating and verbal lashing by faceless torturers determined to break his sense of identity, his manhood, Valdés is stretched out on a cot and his genitals are wired to an electrical current which is applied again and again until he discloses the names of fellow leftists who had gathered at a friend's house. "I hated my capacity to stay conscious," Valdés says, in the depths of his abjection. At that moment "I would have told them anything, anything they wanted." He adds the name of a companion who had not been there, for fear of leaving someone out and receiving the current once more.

But at the end of this extreme ordeal, when he is left to sun himself in the courtyard like a harmless invalid, Valdés's humanity reappears: "I feel much pity for me. I feel much cold for me."

Before the end of this extraordinary chronicle, Valdés has made his message clear: The torture camps are intended to break the will of an entire generation of Chileans whom the junta considers unassimilable misfits and subversives. For every Chilean leftist neutralized into a zombie by the military's torturers, an entire family is depoliticized and turned into "passive deaf-mutes."

In Sitges, Valdés had holed up in a room to work on a novel. Through a mutual acquaintance I learned that he was struggling with a persistent and acute depression and stayed aloof from his fellow Chilean expatriates, who had not shared his prison experience.

The most distinguished Chilean writer living in the United States is the critic and novelist Fernando Alegría, who was Allende's cultural attaché in Washington. Alegría, who is 59 and a graduate of Berkeley and who now teaches at Stanford, regards himself as an exile from Chile's military government although he has lived in California for many years.

Alegría recently published *El Paso de los Gansos* (*The Goosesteppers*), a journal-novel set in the final days of Allende's government and the first weeks of the military regime. The first part of *The Goosesteppers*, which will appear in English next year, is an impressionistic chronicle of Allende's last days, composed in a shifting perspective reminiscent of John Dos Passos's montage technique. The intended effect is an elegy on Allende's personal sacrifice and on the sacrifices of other Chilean martyrs: the poets Victor Jara and Pablo Neruda, the loyal Gen. Carlos Prats. The few glimpses of the "enemy" display them as hate-filled, demented yahoos.

The second, and more affecting half of *The Goosesteppers* is based on the real journal of a 26-year-old Chilean-born Princeton graduate student in philosophy, Cristian Montesino (called Montealegre in the novel), whose marriage and career had fallen apart and who had returned to Chile to pick up the pieces of his life and begin anew. Instead, he met a violent death at the hands of the military police, who arrested him in the home of his father, a staunch junta-supporter, and executed him for presumed leftist associations.

Cristian's view of the terrible events in Chile during and after September 11, 1973, was formed by an introspective, religious sensibility, free of political dogma. The humanistic quality of his journal, as much as the circumstances of his death, make his indictment of the military's actions particularly striking.

"Yesterday, Chile was broken," reads his entry for September 12. "What the military have unleashed they will never be able to put right. They did not know how to do things. Both sides are now pitted in a fratricidal war that will not end in a generation."

I sit with Alegría in his comfortable Palo Alto home, sharing his vintage Rioja wine, and we speak of imprisonment and torture. Edgardo Enriquez, the head of MIR, the extremist Movement of the Revolutionary Left, had been arrested in Buenos Aires the day before; Algería had been on the phone to Amnesty International and other agencies, partly at the insistence of Allende's sister, Laura, a close friend of Alegría's who had called from Mexico.

"My best hope for Enriquez," Alegría says, "is that he swallow a pill and end it, before the torturers get to him. That way at least he can salvage his dignity."

I ask Alegría about another friend of his, the poet Nicanor Parra, who had become disaffected with Allende and chose to stay on in Chile after the coup, retaining his universary post. "Nicanor's decision to remain in Chile fills me with sadness," Alegría says. "I realize most of my leftist friends have harsh feelings toward him, but I will not judge him. I feel, in his own way, he is paying a price for his decision."

Soon after we spoke I learned that Parra had permitted some of his verses to be used in a circus review in Santiago, *Hojas de Parra*, which sharply satirized the military junta. (See "A Breath of Satire" by Frank MacShane, *The Nation*, November 19, 1977.)

"Parra seems to be taking a stand at last," Alegría told me, at our next meeting. "His work will now be heavily censored, and it is possible he may have to leave Chile."

Alegría revealed that he himself had been numbed to the point of paralysis by the events in Chile, and did not begin work on his novel for a year and a half. During that time he had been under constant pressure to take a strong, unequivocal stand against the military government. Alegría's eyes are sunk deep in their sockets. He has the look of a man who has undergone a profound crisis of conscience.

I have the impression that not only Alegría but the rest of these writers, having written their fresh memoirs and novels in the first heat of exile, are now slowing down to reflect on their lives and their careers. The anticipated

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collapse of the military government has not come about: the economic boycott by Scandinavian and other Western nations—notably excepting the United States—has not succeeded in ousting the junta. Instead, they seem to be digging themselves in for a good long stay, with the aid of improbable allies like the People's Republic of China. Many Chileans living abroad feel increasingly isolated and depressed as the period of extended exile begins.

In a sense, these novels and journals attempt to be the *Homage to Catalonia* of the Chilean civil war. But no writer has as yet caught the bitter paradoxes and contradictions behind this tragedy, as George Orwell caught those of Spain. The function of these books is to bear witness, and this they do well, from their respective vantage points: the extreme degradation of imprisonment and torture; the moments of doomed heroism and of self-sacrifice to a common cause; the sensual exploration in a time of mercurial social change. All these aspects of the experience have been excellently rendered in Skarmeta's and Alegría's novels, and in Valdés's memoir. None of these books, understandably, gives a full idea of the economic and political chaos that prevailed in Chile in the final months of Allende's administration; nor do they capture the larger dimension of the evil committed by Augusto Pinochet and his cohorts. These complex events tend to be personalized or treated symbolically, or incarnated in individual martyrs like Allende and Victor Jara, or embodied in a stereotypical—and too often accurate—portrait of the vindictive soldier or official who regards all leftists as contemptible faggots.

None of these books has come to grips with the intense contradictions in the Chilean temperament that so bitterly polarized the country: the sharp social inequities and class hatreds that lurked behind the democratic façade; the legacy of violence inherited from the 300-year-long battle to subdue the fiercely independent Araucanian Indians; all the history of civic unrest and violently suppressed popular rebellions that were camouflaged by Chile's tradition of constitutional government, and which seemed to resurface all at once, like creatures from a long-repressed nightmare, in the summer and fall of 1973.

Also prominently absent from these books is the role of the CIA and other U.S. agencies in subverting Allende's socialist government. Except for Dorfman's essay, there is no attempt by any of these authors to shift responsibility for the Chilean civil war away from Chile. On the surface this seems refreshing, given the extended play our nefarious role in Chile has been getting in the U.S. and world press. But the fact remains that all of the ruling junta's members had at least some of their training in U.S. military facilities in Panama and on the U.S. mainland.

On the other hand, it is also significant that five of the six writers mentioned here have attended U.S. universities. To an extent, we have trained Chile's military rulers and educated its revolutionaries, thereby exacerbating Chile's agony by compounding their contradictions with our own. □

At the Outpost of Journalism

NATURAL SHOCKS. *By Richard Stern. Coward, McCann & Geohegan. 260 pp. $8.95.*

PATRICIA MEYER SPACKS

Natural Shocks both explores and demonstrates the imagination's current reliance on journalistic truth. Sixteen years ago, in *The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing had her protagonist reflect about fiction: "the function of the novel seems to be changing; it has become an outpost of journalism; we read novels for information about areas of life we don't know. . . . We read *to find out what is going on.*" Combining an account of "what is going on" in the life of an imagined character with elaborate factuality about what we know to be happening in the world around us, this novel suggests that the overwhelming reality of "public" experience has drained authenicity from private suffering.

A free-lance journalist, commissioned to write an article about death, encounters a beautiful 22-year-old woman dying of cancer. She stirs his emotions and imagination; once he kisses her on the lips. He goes to Rome in pursuit of a story designed to help an old friend win a Senatorial nomination, encountering there another friend, a stroke victim whose long-time mistress has found it impossible to sustain an erotic connection with him after he suffers a severe angina attack while making love. The story the journalist writes inadvertently destroys his friend's political chances. The journalist's father commits suicide. His mother, in a nursing home, doesn't recognize him. The beautiful girl dies. The ex-wife remarries.

Of such material, Richard Stern creates a novel which at least partially transcends its dismal substance by the precision with which it evokes questions about what such substance means to us now.

Natural Shocks makes a kind of participant observer study of fiction at the outpost of journalism. Acronyms familiar from our daily papers bloom in its prose —OPEC, OAS; also allusions to the famous (Nixon, Amin, Robert MacNamara), to political torture, to civil unrest, to known disasters natural and man-made, floods and oil crises. Frederick Wursup, the protagonist, is compared to Gay Talese and Norman Mailer; he publishes in *Life* and in *The New York Times*. His fictional reality depends heavily on the careful detail which surrounds and sustains him: we know how he makes spaghetti sauce, what kind of mug he drinks from, what furniture from their marriage his ex-wife retains in her apartment (which Wursup can and does survey with field glasses—amassing facts—from his own roof). If readers indeed want "information" from fiction, this novel supplies it in abundance, recalling by such realism the genre's early days, when the form pre-empted a name derived from a word for "news" and justified itself by explicit claims to report the truth about the world.

But the abundant personal, social, and political detail of *Natural Shocks* serves more than the purposes of realism, since the making and finding of news constitute its subject as well as its method. News has replaced gospel, Wursup points out on a talk show, his words remembered by the dying Cicia, who feels flattered that a famous reporter wishes to hear what she has to say. Once people wanted to know about sacred figures; now everyone wants to know . . . about everyone. Seeking such knowledge, Wursup violates intimacy, betrays friendship, diminishes himself—never by specific acts of violation, betrayal, or diminishment; only by the necessities of process. He wishes to help James Doyle, the politician, but when he reads the story he has written, shaped by benevolent intent, he feels its dangerous wrongness. Yet to summarize his experience and his emotions in this way emphasizes their import more insistently

Patricia Meyer Spacks's most recent book is Imagining a Self (*Harvard University Press*).

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than the novel does. The processes of betrayal and of life are so nearly identical here that the character's recognitions contribute to a pervasive melancholy cast of mind but create no possibility for change, not even a focused desire for change: only the vague longing familiar to most of us, that life should somehow be different.

Death, Wursup's editor assures him, is now big news. Over the phone he reads titles of proliferating books on how to die, how to live with the dying. Wursup, becoming absorbed in his journalistic assignment, staves off full recognition of the reality to which it refers. Even Cicia, describing her diffusion of attention, tiring after a walk in the park, but intense in her absorption with the present moment, cannot make death quite real. Its unimaginability persists for her as well as for her observer: her last words, to her mother, who has told her she's dying, are, "You're scaring me." Yet death in this vision is hardly more unreal than life. After his father's unaccountable suicide, Wursup makes a journey to the dead man's apartment. A confusion in timing causes him to miss the consolatory visits of most of his father's surviving friends; he talks only to Chmilewski, who tells stories of "encounters with rodents, dogs or sex-starved housewives" when he and the elder Wursup worked for the gas company, and Jautakis, whose hearing aid seems undependable and who reminds Wursup of "a Central Asian mountain chief, the Wali of Swat, whom he had interviewed nearly twenty years ago." That past encounter occupies his mind more vividly than the present one, although he remembers falsifying it into a "dream of serenity" in his published version. Seeking his own emotion of personal loss, he visits his senile mother, tells her of her husband's death, which she fails in any sense to comprehend. "Then, worn out, absolutely worn out, he let his head drop into his mother's green lap. Only for seconds, though. There was just no point in it."

We have grown accustomed to encountering in fiction images of pointlessness. Stern multiplies such images, but he does not unduly stress them. The force of this novel derives partly from its curious lack of emphasis. Experiences of futility, failed communication (between individuals and through the printed page), anticlimax, compose much of Wursup's life (and the lives of others more fleetingly evoked), but such experiences add up to slightly more than the sum of the parts. Accumulation of the meaningless produces meaning of a minimal sort. The reader would feel hard put (as would the fictional character) to state the nature of such meaning: it seems to reside in the everyday, and in the endurance which enables men and women to face each day with its frustrations. Wursup seeks what he can find with his field glasses, looks for the right Christmas present for his cleaning woman, writes an apologetic letter to a victim of one of his interviews, avoids knowledge of his wife's infidelity, experiences the helplessness of becoming a misinterpreted interview-subject himself. He does nothing of manifest importance, his relationships lack profundity. Once he married, because that seemed the next thing to do; now, for similar reasons, he doesn't remarry. But if the character suffers from inability to experience his own authenticity, the reader experiences it for him, moved by the tiny evoked details of late 20th-century urban existence, convinced that such details compose a life.

Natural Shocks, then, succeeds in its own terms, generating pleasures of recognition and of insight. On the other hand, its terms create problems: the novel too vividly partakes of the news-making it purports to describe. Wursup's long-term girlfriend is a beautiful geophysicist with large breasts, who gives learned papers all over the world but leaks tears at a harsh word and is "a permanent adolescent about her looks." The more extended cast of characters carefully includes one lesbian, one Japanese man, one Indian, designed to evoke physical, psychological, and geographical diversity and the absence of authorial prejudice. Often the characters sound as though they're talking in translation: "Ever meet a lady reporter with an ear? Never. Even Colette. In her fiction, fabulous. In reportage, the ear turned tin. What a little meatball she was." Sometimes the narrator sounds equally peculiar: "he had agitated compliance from a cosmos-drunk Benny." On other occasions his prose has the ring of items one can't quite throw away from an old notebook: "To their right were the two plump churches which made this the most maternal of Roman piazzas, or, with the obelisk in the center, the most hermaphrodite." These diverse aspects of the fiction all contribute to a disturbing externality. Sookie, the sexy geophysicist, like the rest of the supporting cast, seems drawn up according to some novel-writer's chart; people speak to advance the action or to fill the page, not out of the necessities of imagined character. The novel thus becomes an "outpost" not of the journalism that reports but of the variety which manufactures news. Its accuracy and up-to-dateness of detail, its calculations of style, finally weaken the sense of reality on which it relies, since the authorial voice, like the voices of the characters, sounds unrooted in any firm commitment, imitation of our immediate reality here apparently the only end in view.

Richard Stern tells us exactly "what is going on": people live, people die; they fornicate, gossip, write poetry and prose; they miss connections and fail to understand. Saddened by the truth and the pathos of this vision, interested in the details of its expression, we may wince at the book's hint that even expressiveness has only the most limited significance: "At least when I shoot off my mouth, I know I'm alive." The characters of *Natural Shocks* live only precariously—if sometimes vividly— in the imagination. □

ROBERT LOWELL
(1917-1977)

Under the high rooms,
under the trains, the talk,
you kept digging down

from life to life
to come across earth's fragments:
the child; the century's children;

the ones we do not know yet,
because they were flesh—

their secret, lilted home-
voices, faces caught
in lightning. Found there

earth's bone-shadowed eyes;
her still life
your awkward printing:

starvation: light
moving down and up through light . . .

A ladder of stuff: a soft, gray,
broken oar, a feather,
a shoe, a child's pencil-case;

light drawing us
to light,
day speaking to day . . .

Now, at dusk,
the man digging
saw himself approaching:

his half-smile looked past us: past himself:

the man chipping at dusk
under the trains, digging up
the dark, prosperous bluestone.

Jean Valentine

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THEATRE/Harold Clurman

Maria Irene Fornes's *Fefu and Her Friends* is a play that floats (American Place Theatre). There is hardly any situation: a group of women speak at random—in the air. Some of what they say is well said; odd though clear (or vice-versa), with an occasional resemblance to automatic writing. Much of it is just that, *writing*, not dialogue: it does not often *sound* on the stage. What the audience receives is the impression of a series of prose poems strung together. The effect is "circular," like a drifting haze.

Eight women friends—of unknown background—are gathered in a New England house in 1935. (I am not sure why this specification is called for.) The hostess, a woman somewhat older than the others, opens the play with the line, "My husband married me to have a constant reminder of how loathsome women are." She adds to two of her startled guests, "It's true that women are loathsome." Of Fefu's husband one woman comments, "He's crazy. They drive each other crazy. They are not crazy really. They drive each other crazy."

There is constant talk—to the point of obsession—about women and sexuality. There is ambiguity in this, revulsion and fascination. "Men have sexual strength. Women have to find their strength, and when they do find it, it comes forth with bitterness . . . with chattering to keep themselves from making contact, or else, if they don't chatter, avert their eyes, like Orpheus . . . as if a god once said 'and if they shall recognize each other, the world will be blown apart'. . . ."

Another friend is a woman paralyzed by a bullet fired at a deer. Alone in her bed she hallucinates on the subject of "Women are evil. Woman is not a human being. . . . Unpredictable, therefore, wicked and gentle and evil and good which is evil. . . . If a man commits an evil act, he must be pitied. The evil comes from outside him, through him and into the act. Woman generates the evil herself. . . ." and on and on.

A sense of guilt—induced perhaps by some (unmentioned) religious upbringing—hovers in the atmosphere, with a homosexual nuance. Though I must note that a scene and a speech of delicate tenderness between two women who have been lovers is one of the best in the play. With all the sophistication in attitudes and conversation, there are playful descents into childish silliness. The troubled ambiance is discomfiting, so that finally we are almost ready to acquiesce to an amused quip about, "Everyone ended by going to the psychiatrist."

The mixture of elements—symbolism, abstracted or semi-surrealistic discourse, stream-of-consciousness rumination and hysteria along with quirks of humor—keep one, by turn, alert and dazed. Movement is created by having the audience (in divided sections) proceed to different places or settings—a living room, a lawn, a study, a bedroom, a kitchen. There is no intermission, the flow is continuous, except for the time it takes to get from one place to the other. We vaguely overhear bits of one scene being played for one part of the audience while we listen to another. The result is a feeling of simultaneity of action. This contributes to the play's overall style and certainly relieves the danger of being irritated by a teasing nebulousness.

There are several attractive people in the cast. I found particularly affecting Connie LoCurto as the young woman in love with an older one, and Margaret Harrington as the paralyzed woman. I doubt, however, that it was a good idea for the author to direct her play. She likes her lines too well—some of them are eloquent after a particular literary fashion—but their delivery is often made deliberate enough to become exasperating. This may possibly be a calculated ploy, for the play itself teeters on the edge of several different modes.

There is today a cult of the imprecise. It flirts with the so-called unconscious. Addicts will find *Fefu and Her Friends* especially beguiling. To others I say, "Beware!"

A Prayer for My Daughter by Thomas Babe is remarkable chiefly for its actors (Public-Anspacher Theatre). Simon and Jimmy, accused of robbing and killing a poor woman for her few dollars, are brought into a police station for questioning by Sergeant Kelly and his assistant, Jack. We never discover who actually committed the murder—under brutal pressure, the two arrested men accuse each other: Simon at the end is declared "certifiably insane."

The play centers on the psychology of all four men. Simon is a homosexual "superman"—he calls himself a "teacher"—who has the weak, drug besotted, also homosexual Jimmy in thrall. Simon's madness consists of a hypertrophy of intellectual arrogance; he is a moralist superior to morality and therefore contemptuous of everyone and capable of anything. Jimmy is a schizophrenic, impoverished waif who has encountered nothing in his life but unfeeling harshness. He is a pitifully miserable victim of the strong. Sergeant Kelly is a hard-driving cop, harassed and distressed in his private life, so muddled by subjective feeling that his only security is to pursue his brazen job with fanatic zeal and to conform with the shabby remnants of his Catholic upbringing. The assistant, Jack, is eagerly violent, sexually frightened, drug-sustained and ignorant, with smatterings of misunderstood information.

Yes, there is a "psychology" in his play, but it doesn't seem to matter; it has no special pattern of meaning. At most, it represents a tattered picture of confusion and criminality, in the indicted culprits and their persecutors alike. We don't suppose the author holds the diagnosis universally applicable, even in regard to present-day existence. Still, as a slice of soiled life, the picture, except in its acting is unconvincing because the police interrogation is intermingled with exalted confessional rhetoric never spoken by such characters in such a place, or indeed anywhere else.

Thomas Babe writes forcefully, as this and several of his previous plays (*Kid Champion, Rebel Women*) demonstrate, but he has not yet achieved a distinct artistic identity, a personal mark apart from the hectic ambivalence he finds in the personages and situations here and in the earlier pieces. We do not know exactly what he wants to say or hopes to convey. He seems as yet to lack a central theme.

One's interest in this instance is held not by the melodrama of "third degree" practices, and certainly not by the flights of pathetic verbiage but by Alan Rosenberg's martyred infantalism as Jimmy, by Laurence Luckinbill's frozen self-conceit as Simon, by George Dzundza's unswerving professional fanaticism as Kelly, and Jeffrey DeMunn's snaky violence as the Sergeant's sidekick—all of them unrelentingly directed by Robert Allan Ackerman.

There has been sharp controversy about the appearance of James Earl Jones in *Paul Robeson*, called a "new play" by Phillip Hayes Dean (Lunt-Fontanne Theatre). A group of respected citizens, white as well as black, maintain that the event "trivializes" Robeson's history and waters down his "revolutionary" position.

I would have to give the matter more study to pass even a tentative judgment on the issue. All I can say at this point is that, aside from some dull

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and overextended passages in the second part of the evening, I was gripped not only by virtue of Jones's excellence as an actor (and the director Lloyd Richards's able handling of the material) but by this perhaps inadequate outline of a great man, Robeson's story and personality.

What I found even more stirring at this occasion was that, in recalling the scattered biographical facts of the Robeson career, the play let us hear for the first time in a long while on Broadway, a hero who could speak of himself as a firm believer in "scientific socialism," an American black who could not help but be moved by the glowing reception accorded him by the Soviet people. I am inclined to believe that several who reviewed the evening didn't acknowledge their embarrassment at such declarations of Communist sympathy. One need not share these aspects of political leanings or commitments to be glad to hear something of the specific social realities of our recent past—Paul Robeson's lifetime—boomingly voiced in the midst of our supermarket of entertainment. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Like a good many people of my generation, the impression I retain of Berlin between the World Wars, a city I never saw, is a mosaic made up of bits from Marlene Dietrich movies, the caricatures of George Grosz and the short stories of Christopher Isherwood. My guess is that for Ingmar Bergman the sources are approximately the same. I cannot otherwise explain why *The Serpent's Egg*, his nightmare vision of the German capital in the week of November 3 to 11, 1923, at the end of which the Nazi uprising in Munich was crushed and Adolf Hitler went to jail, should produce so strong a sense of *déjà vu*. It is a city of rain-slick streets in foggy light; of vulgar, witless cafés and crowds struggling to buy nonexistent bread with bundles of mark notes in risible denominations; of middle-class men and women butchering dray-horses in the gutters, and sounding from offstage the ever louder drumming of jackboots.

As one would expect, Bergman does this very well; I think few viewers will resist the atmosphere of mixed apathy and frenzy that seized the Berliners in those days, though some may be puzzled to understand why the director, making his first film outside Sweden, chose to recall that well-remembered torment this late in the day. He has not that much to add to an often-reported segment of history.

Bergman chooses to personify the mood of Berlin in Abel Rosenberg (David Carradine), an American trapeze artist who is out of work because his brother and partner has suffered a wrist injury. (This is only 1923, but already the Germans, good and bad, pronounce his surname with a certain emphasis.) The action begins with Abel finding his brother dead by suicide, having left for his estranged wife (Liv Ullmann) a largely undecipherable note that contains a phrase about people being poisoned. It is the first hint of a *Grand Guignol* horror story which emerges gradually as the film proceeds.

The death throws Abel into a state of shock, exacerbated by heavy drinking and punctuated at moments by hysterics and violence—an analogy in one individual to the psychotic society through which the young man restlessly wanders. Manuela, the sister-in-law, works by night in a down-at-heels cabaret (which Bergman evokes with loving care for its awfulness, and which is wrecked with sadistic zeal by a squad of storm troopers); by day, she works in a whorehouse. Despite these vocations, Bergman has Ullmann project Manuela as sweet, vulnerable, nurturing. She tries to pull Abel back to sanity, and they are drawn to each other, but she herself is losing her sanity and the *Grand Guignol* miasma grows thicker.

At its center is one Hans Vergerus (Heinz Bennent), whom the Rosenbergs had known when they were all children. He is now connected with a celebrated Berlin hospital and Bergman does not resist the cliché of telling us that as a boy he had on one occasion cut open a cat for the pleasure of watching its heart beat. At this point, the grin of melodramatic nastiness becomes reasonably apparent.

I don't intend to trace out the mechanics of Bergman's plot, how the death of the brother and other deaths that occur in Abel's vicinity are brought together and related to the complete paralysis of Berlin's social structure. Instead, I want to call attention to three set speeches which project the film's "message." The first of these is delivered by Police Inspector Bauer (Gert Froebe).

MORNING, WITH CHINESE BLUE

Two brown doves strut under the peach tree.
Bees drowse in the bottle brush.
The air's so clear this morning, a feather
might ride its lightness all the way to China.
Across the canyon, a man in a blue bathrobe
paces beside his pool,
and coaches an unseen swimmer.
Their laughing voices, splashed with the sound of water,
float to me, here; are palpable as balloons.
Looking southward, I can see
sunlight lance off the towers of the City of Angels.
Our Lady of that city must have spread
her cloak above us and shaken out this blueness,
for the sky seems brushed by holy wings.
Now, if I turn to the west, and sight
over pines and rooftops, I can catch
the mica-glint of the sea
rolling its blue swells all the way to China.
There, by a stone bridge, an old fisherman,
his catch in a willow basket,
turns in that other light and bows to me.
And I bow back from my country,
from this garden where doves court and the honeybees
fatten on every flower
and a distant swimmer shouts in my very ear.
I bow to the man in China
for joy and for courtesy,
while a swallow rockets up through the blue day
on this morning of perfect vision.

Joan LaBombard

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He is interrogating Abel, who asks him why, when a whole city is dying, he bothers himself with a handful of mysterious homicides. Whereupon Bauer, the model of a German bureaucrat, dissolves into a tearful little man, confesses himself terrified by the destruction of all the institutions and conventions he has been taught to revere, and cries out that he, like millions of other Germans in his condition, is meticulously carrying out his job because it is all he knows to do.

The second occurs when Manuela seeks out a clergyman—like Abel, an American castaway (James Whitmore) —for advice and comfort. He tries to evade her, then admits he has little help to offer, since he has lost faith, if not in God, at least in God's preoccupation with man. The best he can do is forgive her for her sins, if she will forgive him for his. This they proceed to do in a somewhat maudlin little ceremony.

And the third speech is given by Dr. Vergerus, after he has shown Abel films of abominable experiments that stem logically from the evisceration of cats, and before he bites on a cyanide capsule to frustrate the approaching police. The *Lumpenproletariat* left over from the Weimar Republic, says the madly lucid research pathologist, will never rise and seize the world. But, thanks to what is learned from such experiments as his, a new generation of iron will and steel-like nerve will emerge in a decade or so, and it will be the master race. Incidentally, it will sweep the miserable Hitler into oblivion with the first flexing of its purifying wrath. (In a closing scene, Bauer, the good German, also reports happily that the upstart of Munich has come a cropper and been removed from the scene. It is easy to exploit the retrospective irony of history.)

Bergman obviously sets great store by these speeches, but they left me feeling a little embarrassed for him. Can he suppose that they will surprise or enlighten anyone who has thought at all about what happened in Germany during those years before the Reichstag burned? He is dealing in *The Serpent's Egg* with used torments, second-hand ghastliness, and his involvement of Abel the American in a melodramatic subplot of hallucinatory drugs and one-way mirrors cheapens the spectacle of national disaster that he recalls for us.

It is a problem that has bothered me before: Bergman's visual power and narrative imagination are unsurpassed, but he persists in working from scripts of his own devising that lack psychological depth, and his concern for individual human beings, which he proclaims in discussions of his work and which I believe he feels, is frustrated by a disposition to manipulate them for his spectacular cinematic ends. Typically, *The Serpent's Egg* compels you to watch with rapt attention, but its characters are remembered as mannequins. □

The Battle of Chile

HARRY MAURER

The Battle of Chile, Patricio Guzman's three-hour documentary about class struggle in Chile during the final eight months of the government headed by Salvador Allende, will disappoint most North Americans who carry conventional expectations into the theatre. The film is so unusual, so difficult, and raises such basic questions about cinema itself, that it's almost doomed to fail among audiences that are unprepared for what kind of film it is—and what it's not.

First, *The Battle of Chile* is a work of propaganda. That is not a criticism, since most films are at least propagandistic. One way of defining full-fledged propaganda is to say that it simply makes its values and advocacy more obvious than do "objective" or "non-political" films. But this movie amounts to an odd sort of propaganda. In an excellent interview with Julianne Burton (published in *Socialist Revolution*, September-October 1977), Guzman says that, "The film is an attempt to convey in as much detail as possible the nature and consequences of political events in Chile. . . ." His team rejected "agit-prop" film making. Their point of view is plainly that of Marxist revolutionaries—and to that extent the work is propaganda—but they try to analyze rather than inflame or convert. *The Battle of Chile* examines what happened in Chile in order to draw lessons for future use. It was conceived, shot and edited both as a historical record and a revolutionary tool.

For that reason Americans may find it a hard picture to watch. Rather than attempting to sway viewers toward the revolutionary politics of the film makers, *The Battle of Chile* simply assumes that the audience shares those politics. The film's narrator talks about "the strategy of imperialism and the Chilean bourgeoisie" as though everyone sees the world in such terms. Viewers who don't —and even those who do, but who are aware of the terrific complexities this account ignores—will resist. And one form of resistance is to doubt the film's trustworthiness as a factual record of events in Chile. When the narrator, in the first minute of the film, talks of ". . . the bourgeois opposition, which is financed by Washington . . . ," one begins to wonder about other factual statements. Certainly the Chilean Right received support from the United States, but the flatness of the statement makes it exaggerated and misleading. How much money came from Washington? To what parties? If any one of the Chilean leftist parties was supported by the USSR (a purely hypothetical example), would one be justified in stating that "The Chilean revolution was financed by Moscow"?

The Guzman team's passionate commitment to one side of the battle therefore becomes a problem; and paradoxically, so does the distance it assumes from that side. For *The Battle of Chile* is not a moving work. Viewers accustomed to "agitational" documentaries like *Harlan County, U.S.A.* or *Hearts and Minds*—films that spark outrage, pain and intense feelings of solidarity with the people portrayed—will find this one surprisingly cold, as Guzman recognizes. Rarely does *The Battle of Chile* linger upon one human being long enough for us to empathize. Rather, Guzman concerns himself with the great sweep of classes, parties and ideas—and aside from his general identification with the aspirations of the working class, his film is meticulously careful not to espouse any specific line.

Is real analysis possible, given that approach? The film is divided into two parts (a third, on the numerous popular organizations that sprang up in Chile during the Allende years, is still incomplete). Part One, "The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie," describes the economic, ideological and political onslaught carried out by the upper classes against the Popular Unity government in its last year of power—an attack that won over two crucial groups, the armed forces and most of the middle class. Part Two, "The *Coup d'Etat*," portrays the final two months, when

Harry Maurer, who has been assistant editor of The Nation *since 1976, has left the magazine to write about politics and economics in Brazil, among other works in progress.*

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the army was organizing its coup and the Left was unable to agree on how to defend itself. We watch enormous demonstrations and endless small meetings; remarkable scenes in the Chilean Parliament; press conferences and speeches by Allende and the leaders of the various parties; pitched street battles between leftists and rightists; seizures of factories by workers; operations by military men, toning up for the coup; and the horrible bombing of La Moneda Palace on the grim day of September 11, 1973.

But as analysis *The Battle of Chile* falls short. The central idea presented in Part One—that the bourgeoisie abandons its commitment to democracy as soon as the lower classes use parliamentary means to threaten bourgeois privilege—is a useful one, and was demonstrated with unusual clarity in Chile. Part Two raises the question of what to do in the face of the reactionary offensive: Arm the workers? Negotiate with the conservatives? Occupy more factories and farms, or put a stop to occupations? The leftist parties, both within and without the government coalition, had varying answers. But the film gives only the most sketchy idea of what they were, and understates the bitter divisions that contributed to the Left's defeat. In other words, on the broadest level—that of "imperialism and the bourgeoisie" vs. "the workers"—the analysis in the film as a whole is super-simplified and mechanistic; on the more touchy and subtle matter of different revolutionary strategies, it is inadequate; and the film makers refuse to take a stand of their own. This leaves a nonpartisan viewer somewhat befuddled.

But what of a partisan viewer? Different audiences, I suspect, will have absolutely differing reactions to the film. For example, Guzman says that, "In Spain . . . the reaction to the film, to each frame, is so intense that as an outsider you perceive the response almost as a form of alienation." I don't doubt his word, even when he adds that Spaniards watched "with an unbelievable, almost religious reverence." In Europe, or wherever class consciousness is well developed—and particularly in countries like Spain, where sharp social struggle is in progress—*The Battle of Chile* will be not only relevant but compelling; it will be seen as a document of choices that daily confront the population. But in the United States, where the problem of arming the workers is scarcely pressing, some of the picture's immediacy is lost. Because of the muted nature of class struggle in this country, our involvement can be achieved only through a certain intellectual leap, similar to the effort a traveler makes to understand a foreign country.

However, that is precisely why North Americans who care about Latin America—or about social change in general—should see *The Battle of Chile*. At the least, it shows how Chile and Chileans looked and acted during the Allende years. And in its portrait of a self-conscious, mobilized and unquestionably heroic working class, it is more strange and marvelous than anything to be found in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. It is not entertaining; it does not satisfy; it is not successful; but as a record of this hemisphere's most important revolutionary upheaval since Cuba, it has enormous instructive value. □

ART / Lawrence Alloway

This month the Museum of Modern Art is putting on a retrospective of Sol LeWitt, a celebrated 50-year-old artist; and the Whitney will show Duane Hanson, a celebrated 51-year-old. Museums have traditionally shown artists after they have proven themselves by a productive couple of decades and a long exhibition record. LeWitt and Hanson both satisfy these demands and I look forward to their shows, but it is a fact that the proof of excellence that museums require is identical with commercial success. Thus, when a museum selects an artist for a show it endorses the artist in the market. This situation is not new but its ideological restrictions have become oppressive of late, when endorsement of market taste seems to have driven out curatorial speculativeness and independence.

Given this situation in the museum complex, an organization called the New Museum sounds like just what is needed. It is housed in the Graduate Center of the New School for Social Research at Fifth Avenue and 14th Street. The director is Marcia Tucker, formerly a curator at the Whitney Museum. According to her "the New Museum will be in touch with contemporary art at its source." That is to say, it will cut through the gallery structure on which museums are nourished at present. The New Museum's second show is now open and the enterprise's program is worth evaluating.

The first exhibition was "Early Work by Five Contemporary Artists." All the artists were well-known, though the work they did after graduation and before going public was not. (The catalogue has some interesting detail about the New York art world of a few years ago.) The artists were Elizabeth Murray and Joel Shapiro (both with the Paula Cooper Gallery), Dorothea Rockburne (John Weber Gallery), Dennis Oppenheim (present gallery affiliation unclear but he had eleven one-artist shows last year), and Ron Gorchov (last seen in New York at Fischbach). Thus, while it is true that to do this exhibition Tucker went to the sources, it is equally true that each artist enjoys the sanction of the commercial gallery system. Indeed, two of the galleries, Cooper and Weber's, are among those that have seemed to exert an undue influence on the taste of the "old" museums. In its debut, then, the New Museum made an elaborate compromise with established taste. On one hand, the exhibition embraced works that the Whitney probably would not have shown; on the other it simply ratified existing values.

A timid beginning can be defended on the ground that it takes time to get oriented, but what about the second show? Gallery dependence is not the problem with "'Bad' Painting"; here the difficulty is with the conception of the show itself. If this is an exhibition of "bad" painting, to use Tucker's quotation marks, it must be so according to some standard of "good" painting, my quotation marks. Tucker says that the title is ironic, but in fact it indicates her receptivity to current taste conventions. To use "bad," even self-consciously, is to say that there is a mainline from which these artists deviate. Tucker praises them for their "challenge to the conventions of Minimalism," but these are absolutely irrelevant here. The fact that she represents the artists as breaking away from abstract art confers a dominance on abstract art that it does not have. Would Tucker put on a show of abstract painting and call it "Empty Art," as has been argued by partisans of realism?

The "bad" artists are part of the stylistic diversity of 20th-century art, not the other half of a dialogue with Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt and Robert Ryman. Instead of facing the real breadth of American art, Tucker is accepting the power of one group (Minimal artists)

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and nominating another group as its unruly opposition. This confirms existing taste and market patterns and confers a dubious unity on the fourteen "bad" painters. Tucker's museum was supposed to be "new" and it is disappointing that the first two shows reveal such equivocal allegiances to old patterns.

The essential fact about this exhibition is that all the artists draw on the resources of iconography, which is why the label "bad" painting is so mischievous. To put this word, even ironically, on such art is to perpetuate the strictly visual bias of formalist criticism, in which the look is all, the message an embarrassment. Here there is a range of discursive painting that runs from ornate allegory (Eduardo Carrillo) to floating situations (Joan Brown), from *quattrocento* allusions in a parched style (Joseph Hilton) to one-line gags —like a hip Osborne (William Wegman). The whimsical (as opposed to tragic) mythologies of Judith Linhares and Earl Steley, the child-art schemas of Neil Jenney, and the psychedelic patterns of Robert Chambless Hendon and Shari Urquhart have in common not that they are "bad" or anti-abstract but that they use paint's capacity to denote objects and events. There is no reason why this should not be done in an expressionist, neo-primitivist, or painterly manner—all modes represented here—without a campy rationale. They are perfectly normal ways to paint in the 20th century (think of Emile Nolde, Andre Bauchant and Giorgio de Chirico) and do not need to be defined in terms that are distorted by the influence of formalist theory and abstract art.

One failing of New York museums has been their refusal to play host to significant exhibitions originated by out-of-town institutions. The city misses a great deal. After " 'Bad' Painting," the New Museum will house an exhibition of Alfred Jensen's paintings which was assembled by the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. Jensen is a well-regarded but not remarkable abstract painter in his 70s; he probably deserves museum recognition, but it is odd that a respectful gesture of this sort should fall within the program of a "New" Museum (my quotation marks). □

INDIGENOUS MUSIC / Nat Hentoff

Way back before the LP, obsessed jazz collectors cherished the releases of the small, independent, economically marginal labels that obviously hadn't the slightest intention of catering to the mass market. Listeners of my generation brought themselves up on the "pure" improvisations within the grooves of Commodore, Blue Note, and other such cottage-industry jazz companies.

Today as well, anyone involved in the farther explorations of jazz (or black music, as most of its black practitioners prefer to call it) has to depend on the new small labels to get a sense of what's going on. India Navigation, for example, has a limited but brilliantly distinctive catalogue that includes work by Leroy Jenkins, David Murray, and on its most recent releases, Arthur Blythe, Hamiet Bluiett and Chico Freeman. Such names are hardly familiar to the mass music audience, but they will be writ large in future chronicles of black art.

Blythe, an alto saxophonist, has an exceptionally forceful presence—whether all by himself in the intimately lyrical *My Son Ra* or inside a collective whirlwind, as in *The Grip*. Interestingly, he gives a vital ensemble role to the tuba (Bob Stewart) as part of his desire "to tie together elements from the entire range and history of the music." The tuba, he reminds us, "was, after all, the original bass instrument in the New Orleans band." And giving particularly biting drive to the rhythm section is the conga drum (Muhammad Abdullah), included by Blythe because it "goes back to the earliest roots of rhythm in the African tradition."

The rest of this densely arresting band consists of trumpet, cello and trap drums. The compositions, all by Blythe, are crafted with uncommon care and yet the diverse emotional content is powerfully direct. The album's title is *The Grip*, and no major record label would have touched it.

Chico is perhaps the first album I would recommend to someone who's been out of touch with jazz for some years and would like a not-too-intimidating way back in. Chico Freeman, a tenor saxophonist who also plays flute and bass clarinet on this date, has had wide experience—from rhythm and blues groups (The Dells, the Four Tops) to advanced jazz seasoning with the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians and Elvin Jones's band. He swings deeply and with complete authority, and his sound, when he wants it to be, is clean, full-bodied and quite resplendent. Freeman is also masterful at structuring his improvisations so that they cohere with what appears, in retrospect, to have been a riveting inevitability of design.

While Freeman is an integral part of what some have loosely called "free jazz," he points out that he learned early from his father—Von Freeman, a highly respected Chicago musician—that to *sound* free, you have to have much knowledge. And in actuality, he adds, "there's no such thing as playing free. You have to use a lot of structures."

Because Chico Freeman, like Blythe, is continually thinking as well as feeling, his work is excitingly logical (or logically exciting). The same can be said of his colleagues: bassist Cecil McBee, drummer Steve McCall, and pianist Muhal Richard Abrams (the latter for years the central guiding force of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music from which so many now influential younger players have emerged).

The AACM was a Chicago phenomenon. Its St. Louis counterpart was the Black Artists Group, and an organizer of that company was Hamiet Bluiett, easily the most impressive baritone saxophonist in the history of jazz. (I say this with all respect for the late Harry Carney and the still thriving Gerry Mulligan).

Bluiett's background includes time with Latin bands and with such jazz figures as Charles Mingus and McCoy Tyner. His most daring appearance on records is the new *Birthright/A Solo Blues Concert*. Considering the seemingly ungainly nature of the baritone sax, it would appear foolhardy to try to sustain a whole album of a cappella improvisations on the horn. But Bluiett, with prodigious technique that he never exploits for its own sake, is absorbing throughout the whole route—a stunning revelation of melodic inventiveness and rhythmic ingenuity.

The program ranges from a message to his son, other family portraits, a vignette of free black American history, and a tribute to Harry Carney. All three of these sets are on India Navigation, P.O. Box 559, Nyack, N.Y. 10960. This is a company that surely deserves a federal arts grant. □

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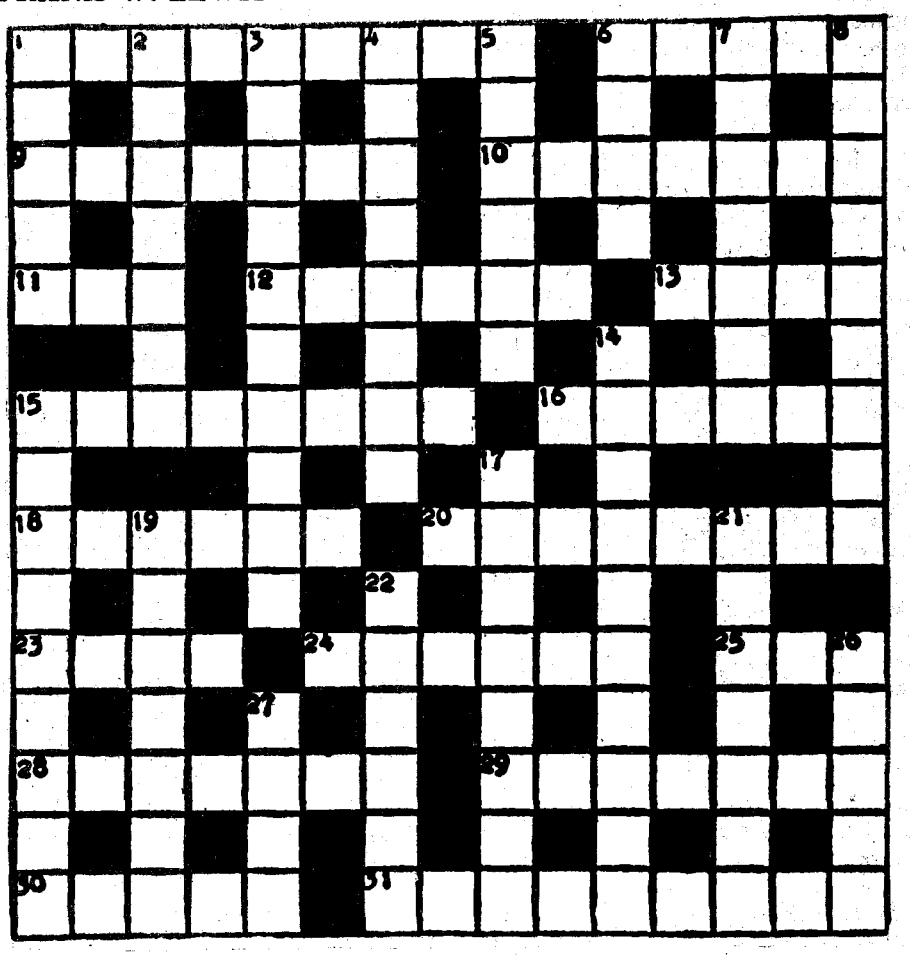
Crossword Puzzle No. 1713

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 16 Things don't progress uniformly so, because of the right-size clothes, and jerks that go with them. (2,4,3,6)
6 Might fall into place at closing time. (5)
9 A melodic embellishment is almost more hollow. (7)
10 Martyr of centuries ago or later, about one thousand. (7)
11 and 8 down How might one describe a shibboleth for some people? I'm not sure! (3,4,2,3)
12 Curved paths? Rather, pieces of such. (6)
13 and 30 Baltimore, for example, finished last according to forecast. (9)
15 One of two parts of the city that must have sidewalks? (4,4)
16 See 1 across
18 Old linear units, or just copper pieces?
20 Sweet stuff, but the lid inside is broken, frankly. (8)
23 See 3 down
24 A card game takes 10, according to the movie establishment. (6)
29, 25 and 28 Sounds as though a sailor, as well as a pitcher and catcher, could be in charge. (7,3,7)
30 See 13 across
31 Mean and ungenerous with money? (You might have to account for it.) (5,4)

DOWN

1 Having a novel animal cub, am bitten by it, as you can see. (5)
2 Longfellow considered one of them primeval. (7)
3 and 23 It begins with *The Man of Property*. (3,7,4)
4 Naturally, it's in serum, but you can make any bit do. (8)
5 Sounds as though you get to pass on 6 down, and should be swell! (6)
6 See 22 down
7 In a way, it's about Mr. Drum. (7)
8 See 11 across
14 It gives a sort of turn, rather foxy, to 24—but that's the way scholars work! (10)
15 Do you say "Pardon me!" for such behavior? (Because 10 and 50 are all mixed up!) (9)
17 One of the things the early Mormons pushed. (8)
19 Paying no attention to other people's opinions, I got in bed! (7)
21 Stoker responsible for this. (7)
22 and 6 down Those who do, don't believe in early retirement. (4,2,4)
26 Land in water, unexpectedly, and lose pursuit. (5)
27 Drawn on the target. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1712

ACROSS: 1 Remote control; 10 Opera; 11 Shortstop; 12 Imprisons; 13 Moira; 19 Hair restorer; 22 Orlop; 24 Stirrings; 25 Guarantee; 26 Viola; 27 General strike. DOWN: 2 Exempt; 3 and 23 On a higher plane; 4 Enscones; 5 Oboes; 6 Totem; 7 Outright; 8 Tonic; 9 Sprains; 15 Atomizers; 16 Deep River; 17 and 14 Through thick and thin; 18 Millrace; 20 In hock; 21 Aswan; 24 Sitka.

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